

COSPLAY

STAR WARS SPECIAL!

1 OF 2
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TURNS
TO THE
DARK
SIDE!

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DARTH
WANTS YOU!

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V15 #24

WORDUP PRESENTS

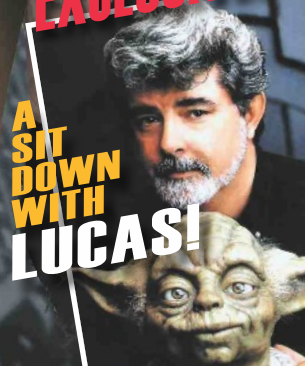
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SWC 2015
JEDI ART
STAR WARS INK
AND MORE!

EXCLUSIVE!



A
SIT
DOWN
WITH
LUCAS!

AND THE
WINNER
IS...



LOST AGAIN!
WHY CAN'T I JUST
MAKE THIS HAPPEN?!

LATER THAT
EVENING...

RELAX,

YOU'RE STILL A PRETTY
BIG GEEK WHETHER YOU
WORE THE SAME COSTUME
AS SOMEONE ELSE OR NOT.
YOUR FANDOM IS SAFE.

YOU DON'T GET IT,
MINDANE! HERS WAS
PERFECTION. WHAT AM
I GOING TO DO? THE
NEXT CON IS JUST
8 WEEKS AWAY.

MOM?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

WHAT THE...11 STITCH TYPES...
SEWS THROUGH LEATHER LIKE
BUTTER...COMES WITH 5 PRESSER
FEET...ALL METAL PARTS...
MOM!

I KEEP UP WITH THE
FACEBOOK AND THE TWITTERS.
...
I'VE GOT YOUR
SECRET WEAPON.

THERE'S A CATCH.
THERE'S SOMETHING
I WANT YOU TO
MAKE ME.

WHAT'S THAT?

PROUD.

TO BE CONTINUED...

BERNINA
made to create

Star Wars. It's a near perfect collision of cosplay and pop culture. Granted when the first round of *Star Wars* movies hit the big screen the culture of cosplay had not even emerged, but now the two are alive and well in the 21st century. Sci-fi has been an integral part of pop culture since the first nitrate-based flickers of 1902's *A Trip to the Moon* (*Le Voyage dans la Lune*) to the much-anticipated *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, so we took this opportunity to take a look back at some of the characters and costumes that made *Star Wars* and many other sci-fi classics so important to the cosplay culture. Flip to the story in this issue entitled *The Moon to Tatooine: The Evolution of the Space Costume*, for a humbling recollection.

Lightspeed to the present where we hit the SWC 2015, one of the world's largest cons for *Star Wars* devotees. Everything from cosplayers to gear to tattoos- all *Star Wars*, all weekend long. What would an issue dedicated to *Star Wars* be without a sit-down with the master himself? J. Rentilly snagged some time with George Lucas. Read the exclusive interview from the man who started it all. Then shields up as we meet with the ever-popular 501st, an organization determined to keeping the authentic culture of *Star Wars* costuming alive as they are to coordinating and participating in charity events across the country.

OK, OK, we know you've been waiting for this, so without further ado, we give you the lovely and talented LeeAnna Vamp! No introduction necessary- just turn to page 42 to read her revealing interview and enjoy her beautiful photo layout.

There's way more *Star Wars* data inside, including two great how-tos! Plus expanded con coverage, a photographer profile, action figure action, and tips on what to buy the cosplayer in your life (that could include yourself) for Christmas.

Enjoy and "May the Force be with you." (C'mon, you know we had to say that.)

Dye, cut, glue, sew, and have fun,
The Editors



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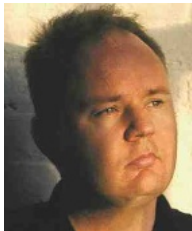
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COSPLAY CULTURE

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Dan Howell

Photographer Dan Howell's work stands at the intersection between fashion and costumes. Working for years as a fashion photographer specializing in bridal and evening gowns, he developed an appreciation for the character of intricate designs. Along the way he was given the opportunity to apply his sensibility to costume images for companies like Simplicity Patterns and individual portraits of burlesque and sideshow performers. His portrait work has appeared in magazines like *Urban Ink* and *Rebel Ink*. Recently, he has been working on a series of fantasy bridal fashion images through photo-manipulation. More of his work can be seen at: bridalfashionphotography.com.



Alan Scholting

Award-winning writer and founder of Synester Saints Entertainment, Alan Scholting is a true fanboy turned professional. As a columnist, he has had the pleasure of interviewing everyone from WWE superstars to legends like Stan Lee and Oscar/Emmy winners like Greg Nicotero. As a fiction writer, he has written everything from comic scripts to short stories. In mid-2014, Scholting was awarded the E.M. Koepfel Story of Distinction for his short story "Whiskey Sours." He resides in Illinois with his wife, two children and an enormous comic book collection.



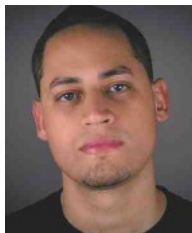
Bill Waytowich

Bill Waytowich is a writer and designer. He has also been the art director for *Country Song* magazine as well as assistant art director for *Faces* and *Hit Parader* magazines early on in his career. He has recently written articles for *Skin&Ink* magazine and has prior experience for many years as an art director for a major medical publishing company. He is a collector of antiques and enjoys vacationing on the Cape with his family.



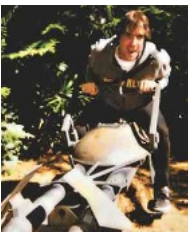
Jason Laboy

Jason Laboy is a photographer based in the Bronx, NY. He first started shooting in 1995 at the age of 16. Laboy stopped shooting in 1998, to pursue other avenues professionally. However, his passion for photography was rekindled back in 2013. During this same time he was introduced to cosplaying. Since then, Laboy has fallen in love with the cosplay community. He says that he loves capturing images of cosplayers because he understands the passion and the effort put into the design of the costumes—which is exactly what he tries to bring to the table with his photography.



Steve Prue

Steve Prue likes to imagine himself as a cross between Spike Spiegel and Vash the Stampede (less guns and more tattoos, though). His friends feel it's more like Patrick from *SpongeBob* meets Shaggy from *Scooby-Doo*. Steve's work can be seen everywhere from the covers of tattoo magazines to those magazines they keep behind the counter at the finest gas stations and convenience stores across the country. He has more than one robot tattoo, went to Tokyo to see a lifestyle Gundam, and firmly believes that Han shot first. His work can be found on the web at eamrockstarimages.com.



Casey Walsh

At an early age, Casey Walsh knew he loved two things more than anything else: comic books and video games. As he grew up, Casey only became more fanatical and obsessive and wanted to share his passion with the world. Then, he found *GeeksWithWives.com*. Here Casey would establish its comics section and quickly moved up the ranks, becoming cosplay editor and eventually becoming editor-in-chief. He also founded the entertaining and sometimes informative "Geeks With Wives & Capes" podcast, a weekly podcast dedicated to all things comic books and superheroes. It has played host to awesome guests like Jeff Wadlow, Frank Barbiere, Rick Spears, Donny Cates and many more esteemed comic book writers, creators and artists.



J. Rentilly

J. Rentilly is an award-winning author and journalist who has enjoyed the privilege of interviewing luminaries and legends as diverse as Hunter S. Thompson and Stan Lee, Toni Morrison and Francis Ford Coppola, J. J. Abrams and Weird Al Yankovic – though, sadly, not at the same time. That would've been cool. He lives in Los Angeles with his three teenage sons. While Rentilly has yet to make his maiden foray into the world of cosplay, many people have mistaken his day-to-day wardrobe as being similarly, uh, inventive.



Ian Freeman

Ian Freeman is a tech, pop culture, gaming and entertainment contributor whose writings can be found in *Evolve Entertainment*, *Stuff Fly People Like*, *GiantLife*, *Strange Wonderful* and *The Urban Daily*. When he isn't writing about it he is on his soapbox preaching the good word of geekdom through the geek division of his marketing company the Legion Media Group.



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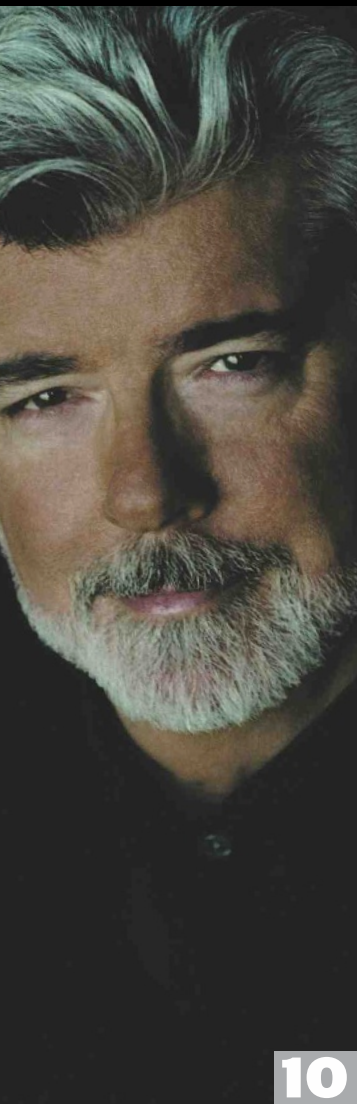
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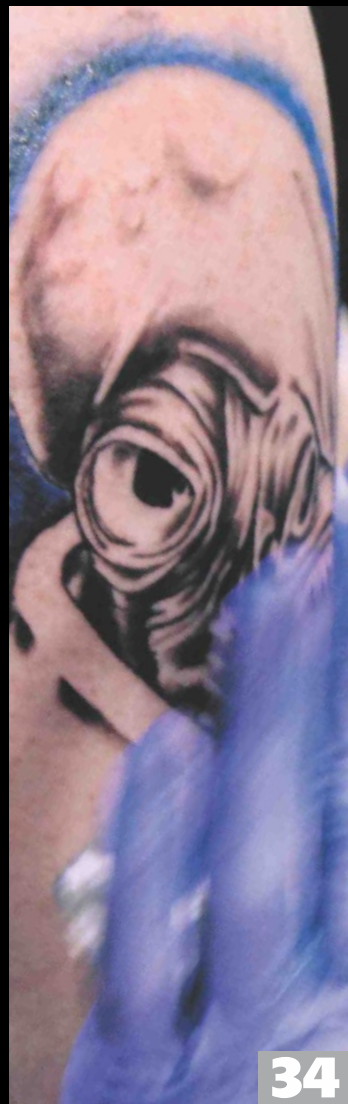
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Here's a look at what makes our world just a bit more fun! This stuff made it to our desks, now it can make its way onto yours. Here's what made the cut this issue. If you have any products that you'd like to see featured in Geeks & Gadgets, send it to: Cosplay Culture, 210 Route 4 East, Suite 211, Paramus, NJ 07652 Attn: Geeks & Gadgets

ThinkGeek's *Star Wars* Glowing Lightsaber Ice Pop Maker

A saber that both Jedi and Siths savor!

You know how when summer ends, you don't stop buying ice cream, you just start getting less of it? Well that's not the case here. You fanboys and fangirls will feel the same about this as you do about *The Empire Strikes Back*—you won't get enough.

This frozen Force treat is something you'll want to stock up on every month of the year. Each set of the ice pop maker, officially licensed by Lucasfilm and designed by ThinkGeek, comes with both two Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader hilts. Add the elixir of your choice to the mold, and after four short hours of freeze time, you can enjoy an edible 6-inch version of your favorite space sword. The saber hilts, which run on two AAA batteries, even come with an LED feature so you can light up every lick.

\$34.99

Available online at thinkgeek.com



Star Wars: The Digital Movie Collection

Binge-ready bundle for a supreme saga experience!

Maybe you're a *Star Wars* fan but don't want to be bothered by all the frills. You wouldn't wear Yoda slippers, nor do you need a Death Star stress relief ball. Simply put, you like to watch the movies. That's cool, but would a new set of the saga, released in digital HD for the first time, not to mention packed with exclusive special features, be too showy for you? Didn't think so. *Star Wars* supporters of all levels, and film fanatics for that matter, will both benefit from *Star Wars: The Digital Movie Collection*. This bundle, which was released last April, includes all six of the already-released films, presented in bright colors and crisp audio like never before. There are also over nine hours of bonus features, which include interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, documentaries, deleted scenes, and so much more.

\$89.99

StarWars.com



Star Wars Accordion Sunshade

For when you're taking a break from hyperspace

Just because your Millennium Falcon, or uh, your 2000 Mazda Millenia, is not in drive doesn't mean it's any less cool. Be the prize of the parking lot with this *Star Wars* sunshade by Plasticolor! You'll get various stamps of approval, such as high fives and fist bumps, not to mention a chance to break the ice when fairer sex fans walk by. And as for the *Star Wars* faithful? They will get out of your way—before you even hit the road.

Presented in a universal size, the *Star Wars* Accordion Sunshade features your favorite four about to go into light-speed: Chewie, Luke Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Han Solo. The galaxy is yours.

Plasticolor

\$24.99

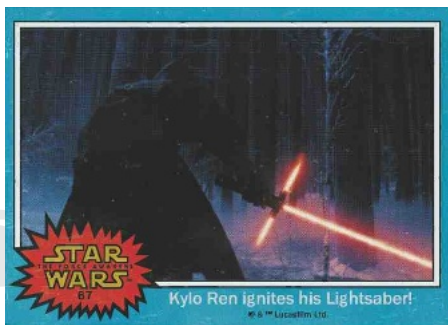
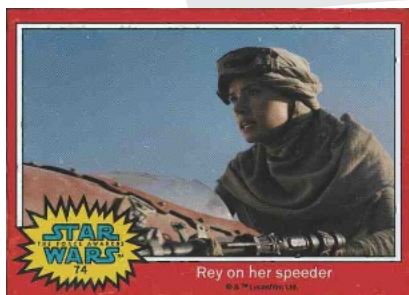
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Star Wars: The Force Awakens Digital Trading Cards

Movie magic in card form!

Presented in the old school collectible card style (sans bubblegum) of brightly-colored borders and action-packed one-line captions, these cards will prevent you from twiddling your thumbs while you wait for *The Force Awakens* to finally come out. The digital trading cards will help



familiarize you with the saga's new characters, the heroes and otherwise. You better get used to names like Finn, Rey, Poe Dameron, Kylo Ren, and many more! Cards are numbered in the high digits, so expect the others to be revealed at least up to opening night.

StarWars.com

Cryptid Action Figure Line by Creaturelica

Premier plastic primates!

Toy design and sculpting great Jean St. Jean exercised some primal rage when he began training the formerly wild monsters of the Creaturelica action figure line. This roar de force is a must-have for cryptozoologists, or those who have a particular interest in what some label as urban myths. Six sharp-toothed (mostly) ape ancestors, in total were released. The first roster of these 7-inch models include the North American Sasquatch, the Himalayan Yeti, the HorrorHound, and the Louisiana Rougarou. The bipedal beasts, complete with an enviromental base piece appropriate for their habitats, were announced in March 2014, before breaking outta their cages two Octobers later alongside other brutes-when-provoked. St. Jean writes on the Creaturelica website that the company gave him the opportunity to "approach this line with a level of attention to detail, sculptural refinement, and authenticity that hasn't been given to the topic before," and suggested that the line doesn't "look like the typical versions of cryptids that are generally thrown out there by typical toy manufacturers." Whoa. We're in.

\$34.99

creaturelica.com

For more on the creations of toy sculptor Jean St. Jean, head over to page 96.



Heroes Never Sleep Sleep Masks

Your favorite superhero doesn't sleep—but you do

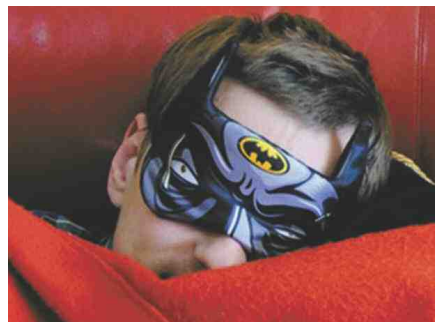
Saving the world requires a lot of energy, which is why superheroes never sleep. But no matter how often you tell yourself otherwise, you're not a superhero. And you do a lot of sleeping. Odds are you're going to nod off this weekend when you try to watch every Batman movie franchise in chronological order, so why not do it with a sleep mask of the Caped Crusader himself? Introducing the line of Heroes Never Sleep sleep masks by Shuba Gift Factory, which allows you to tap into your inner cartoon crime fighter as you're catching Zs.

The likeness of three different heroes are offered to aid you in your REM sleep quest: The Bat, Hal, and Spider. There's also a bundle option available for super sloths. Suit up and rest up today!

Shuba Gift Factory

\$15-17 each

shuba.tictail.com



GEORGE LUCAS

The master behind Star Wars prepares for a changing of the guard

ARTICLE BY J. RENTILLY

Born unto a dusty farm in the middle of nowhere, constitutionally driven (so to speak) by a need for speed (which nearly killed him as a teenager), a fiercely iconoclastic individual who has always favored independence over affluence (ending up with *both*, as fortune would have it), George Lucas' biography bares more than a passing similarity to that of his fictional progeny, Luke Skywalker.

Though it has been more than 30 years since the world last glimpsed the peasant-cum-Jedi in *Return of the Jedi*, having apparently eradicated all threats to clean living posed by the ruthless Empire in Lucas' *Star Wars* landmark franchise, in the new *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, global audiences will receive a blockbuster briefing on the legendary hero's doings during pondered-over missing years.

Whereas *Star Wars* Episodes IV-VI (*A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Jedi*) saw Skywalker cycling through his very own Hero's Journey (a rousing monomyth narrative philosophy developed by the late Joseph Campbell and an admitted primary influence on Lucas), the 71-year-old filmmaker himself strayed from the heroic path to which legions of moviegoers considered him obligated, choosing life as a newlywed father (and some \$4 billion from The Walt Disney Company) over creating additional tales from "a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away." (If you've been living in the Outer Rim Territories for the last two years, Disney acquired Lucasfilm, announcing a jaw-dropping and prodigious slate of Jedi-related films for the coming decade, beginning with *The Force Awakens*, stewarded by J.J. Abrams.)

These days, Lucas resides in Northern California, preparing

for the 2018 Chicago launch of Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and continuing with his myriad philanthropic efforts, content apparently to surrender his lightsaber to a new creative team. While *The Force Awakens* continues what is no longer George Lucas' story, there is no denying the unfathomable cultural import and influence of the six *Star Wars* films he did make—not least of all to the planet's stalwart cosplaying brethren. Here, the modern-day auteur considers all that went well, and a thing or two that may not have, with the powerhouse franchise, reflecting too on the power of costuming in telling his timeless stories.

Cosplay Culture: Your work with the *Star Wars* franchise ended, more or less, 10 years ago, though you've continued to work on *The Clone Wars* and to consult on the Disney features. Do you feel like you're going to miss the universe that you created?

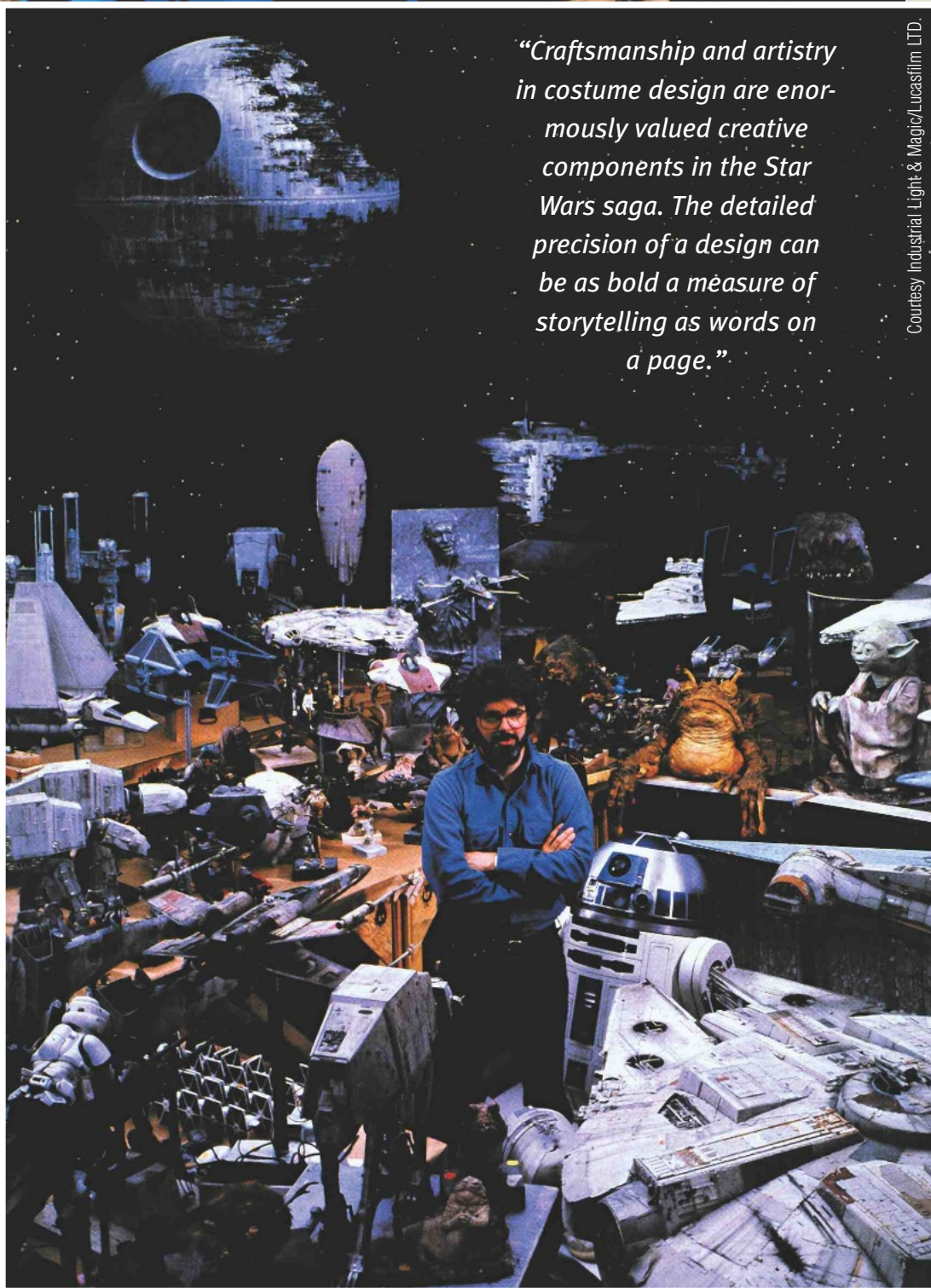
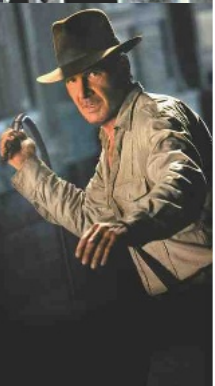
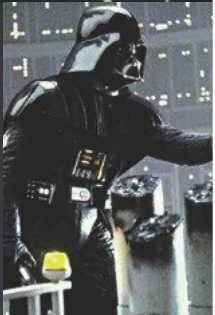
George Lucas: I am not going to miss it. I loved doing it, but it's 30-ish years of my life and I'm anxious to get on and do other things. Whether I'm directly involved with the future of the *Star Wars* universe or not, it is in very capable hands and there will, in all likelihood, be more *Star Wars* in the next decade than in all of the other years combined.

You've created so many indelible characters, not only in the *Star Wars* universe, but in your other films. Is there a specific character you'll miss the most?

Um, well... R2D2.

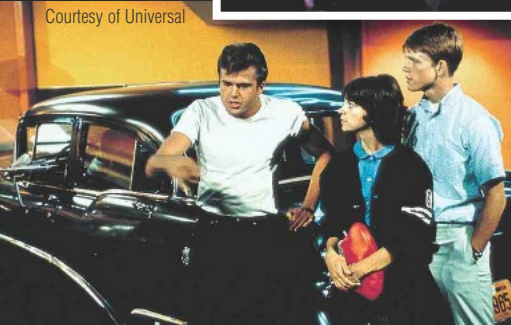
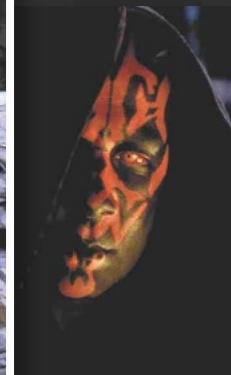
Why is that?

Because he's the hero of the whole story! (Laughs.) He's the

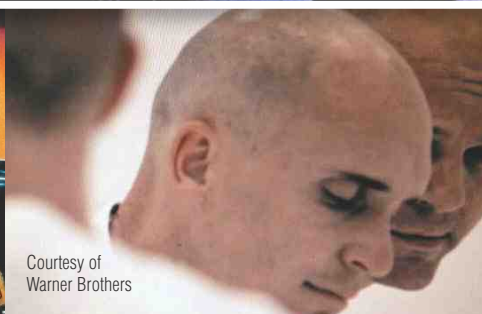


"Craftsmanship and artistry in costume design are enormously valued creative components in the Star Wars saga. The detailed precision of a design can be as bold a measure of storytelling as words on a page."

Courtesy Industrial Light & Magic/Lucasfilm LTD.



Courtesy of Universal



Courtesy of Warner Brothers



one who always comes through and saves everybody. I'd like to have a pal like that who would come and save me once in a while.

On the eve of *The Force Awakens*' release, will you have any words of wisdom for the team that made the film, as audience expectations and comparing is certain to happen? For example, *Episodes I-III* took some pretty substantial drubbings.

To people who did not like *Phantom Menace* or *Return of the Jedi* or whatever Episode, or whatever other film I've made, or that *anyone* else has made, all I'd say is, "More power to you." Which I guess connects to the first part of your question, to which I would say: *Star Wars* is in very capable hands. J.J. [Abrams] and Lawrence Kasdan [co-writer of *Force*, as well as *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*] and their amazing team, they're far too smart to need any "wisdom" from me. All I can say, really, is: The *Star Wars*

films are liked by half of the people and they're hated by half of the people. And that includes critics, too. It's been that way since 1977, so who says nothing ever stays the same? (Laughs.)

Let's go back to *Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*, and the fairly rancorous reception they received. Were they the movies you hoped to make? Do you feel audiences misunderstood them or came to theaters with too much baggage?

I made the movies I wanted to make. That's what I've always done. I make the movies I want to make. In that way, I think I've always been an independent filmmaker, though even the smartest, most industry savvy filmgoers often forget that, probably because of the scope and scale and genres in which I've often worked. But I don't do market research. I'm not a studio. I do what I want to do, and I've tried to make sure that a film's commercial fate, whether it makes or

loses money, does not too profoundly impact other individuals or companies. I tell the story I want to tell, and I tell it for very personal reasons. It was a very difficult decision to go back to the *Star Wars* stories 15 years after *Return of the Jedi*. I truly and sincerely figured I was done with *Star Wars* after *Jedi*. I didn't want to do *Star Wars* anymore. But then it technically became possible to do the stories I wanted to do *and* I had this backstory, the history of Darth Vader, which intrigued me because it turned the whole series on its head. People always assumed *Star Wars* was the story of Luke Skywalker. It's not. It never was. The series was really about Darth Vader to me all along.

***Episodes I-III* made that clear to audiences.**

I think so too. I *hope* so. The backstory as it's told in those three films, it's about bringing audiences more deeply into a story they *thought* they knew complete-





ly, and then turning on a light to reveal that things are, maybe, a little bit more complex than that—which they often are in life, right? For me, Anakin's story, as told from its very beginning, is one that inspires in me a lot of sympathy and compassion. In so many ways, I feel very, very sorry for Anakin, for that little boy who became a villain I don't think any person ever really wants to be. It's a question sometimes of big choices, but often, it's the computation of several very small decisions that can lead us to The Dark Side, if you want to call it that.

Many audiences were very resistant to that notion, as if the addition of some very potent moral and spiritual gravity to the simpler, affirmative ideas of The Force offered in Episodes IV-VI were either "health food" or just a bummer. Well, it was a hard decision to make, the decision to tell Anakin's story in three episodes—because I always *knew* what the story was, and it doesn't end, at least by the closing of *Sith*, with a wedding or an awards ceremony or with everybody happy. Those three films are

about the fall of one man and the impact that can have on...

An entire galaxy!

(Laughs.) Yes, that's right. But I think it was a difficult proposition for audiences in some ways because so much of *Episodes I-III* is backstory—character and exposition. It's not really a story, in some senses. It's not what audiences typically expect from movies, I think. In films like *Episodes I, II, and III*, you reveal who the characters are and what they're doing, but it's all backstory in a way, because your audience knows where it's all going. It's all build-up, but I'm not sure, in retrospect, if that's really a *plot*. I knew almost all of that going into *Phantom Menace*, but I dared myself. I dared myself to do a character piece without much plot, just to see if I could turn the other films on their heads.

Many critics and fans were aggravated by some of the subplots and new characters—Jar Jar Binks, especially—in Episodes I-III. How would you answer those complaints today?

When I went to do the backstory, how Anakin Skywalker became Darth Vader, I ran into the reality of things very quickly. In *Phantom Menace*, what's the story? Basically, Anakin is a slave kid and he loves his mother and he becomes a part of the Jedi Order. That's not a lot of story. That's, basically, a 30-minute movie. So I did a "jazz riff" for the rest of that film. I figured I would enjoy myself a bit and take some time in some of the worlds I created for that film and, eventually, we'd get to the act break, the place where the next film needed to begin. So then I sat down to write *Attack of the Clones* and realized I was in sort of the same situation: Anakin and Amidala fall in love but they're not supposed to, and some bad things happen and we get a bit of trivia about the Empire. That's another 30-minute movie. So I riffed some more. Then when it came time to write *Sith*, the pay-off, the thing I think a lot of audiences were really eager to see, I had a different problem. The story that needed to be covered in *Revenge of the Sith* was, like, 80% of the backstory, or a four-hour movie. (Laughs.) I had a lot

more story to tell than I had time to tell it, so I was constantly cutting things down. The third movie has, basically, the entire story in it.

Let's talk a bit about how the *Star Wars* universe is brought to life, specifically via costuming. For *A New Hope*, your costume designer John Mollo won an Oscar. What role do you feel wardrobe and costume design play in the *Star Wars* films? Well, the primary job of a costume is to help develop a character. The costume has to be designed around the psychology of the character, so then it represents the culture from which it comes.

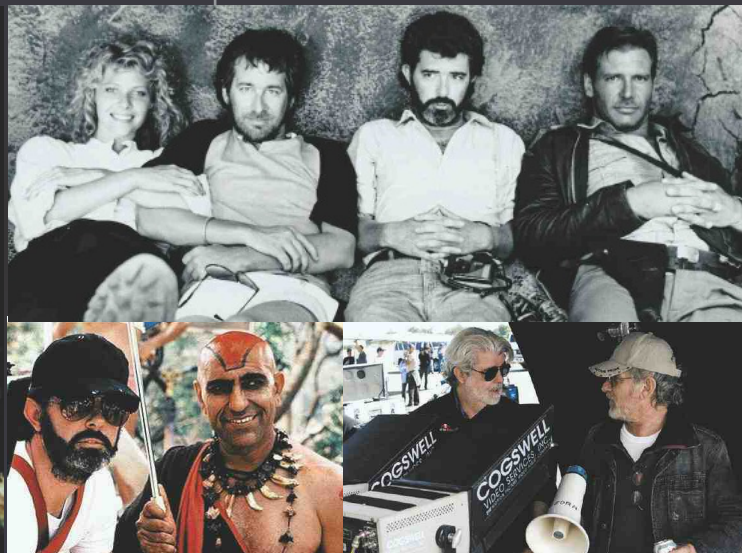
Even devoted filmgoers often overlook the fact that these costumes are the result of tremendous creative energies. None of it happens arbitrarily or acciden-

tally, right? Costuming is a fundamental component of the *Star Wars* universe. Definitely. Craftsmanship and artistry in costume design are *enormously* valued creative components in the *Star Wars* saga. The detailed precision of a design can be as bold a measure of storytelling as words on a page. But it starts with what's on the page. The writer has to really do his or her job first, and do it very well. For me, I have to create a character's cultural milieu first, and with *Star Wars*, that's not a real one. So I've always tried to give it some authenticity, some depth, by using a real culture as the basis so we can begin to define the nuances that are going on in that culture. That would inform us about whether they wear bracelets, whether they *wouldn't* wear bracelets, what kind of boots they would have, the nature of

the way they carry themselves and the way that they do things. On the first film, I very scrupulously avoided fashion. I made everything as simple as possible. Clothing those characters was one of the biggest challenges because I didn't want the costumes to look *designed*. I didn't want them to jump out at you, or for audiences to go back to the film in 20 years and say, "Oh, that's *really* dated!"

With *Episodes I-III*, the entire visual design went into overdrive a bit.

Yes, we walked right into a fashion statement head-on! (Laughs.) But those costumes, too, are almost all historical in one way or another, or cultural in one way or another. Very few of those designs—not to take *anything* away from them at all, they're *brilliant*, I think—are actually entirely *new*. They



COSTUME DESIGN IN THE FILMS OF GEORGE LUCAS

THX.1138

Lucas' 1971 feature film debut is a dystopian nightmare set in the 25th century where, according to the movie's poster, "Love is the ultimate crime." To be sure none of his characters looked good enough to knock boots with, Lucas (working with costume designer Donald Longhurst) masterfully articulated a stark, ascetic visual mode that is clinical, bloodless, chilling, and decidedly *not* sexy. It is genius, however.

AMERICAN GRAFFITI

An autobiographical, nostalgia-drenched valentine to early '60s small-town America—replete with milkshakes, drag racing, and classic rock—*Graffiti* was costumed by newcomer Aggie Guerard Rodgers, who stretched her \$4,000 wardrobe

budget to near perfection by doing a lot of shopping at thrift stores and JCPennys. Pleated skirts, madras shirts, cardigans, tartan minis, bowling shirts, all paved the way for the vintage revival that rocked the '70s and '80s, hitting the boob tube with *Happy Days*.

THE INDIANA JONES SERIES

Drawing wardrobe inspiration from a mostly forgotten Charlton Heston adventure film, *Secret of the Incas*, Oscar-winning costume designer Deborah Nadoolman worked closely with Lucas, Harrison Ford, and director Steven Spielberg to craft Indy's trademark look—the battered flight jacket, crumpled fedora, shoulder bag, and bullwhip. (For more on costuming Indiana Jones, check out *Cosplay Culture* back issues.)



hark back to other cultures, other eras, different times. Another thing I should say about the work Trisha Biggar did on those films is that her work is not appreciated in all of the ways that it really should be. Costumes have a tendency to appear on the screen for a very short amount of time, so it's *very* hard to see the details and the *thousands* of hours of work that go into each one.

After making *Episodes IV-VI*, you threw in the towel on *Star Wars*, only returning when you felt filmmaking technology had caught up with your imagination. What were some of the logistical challenges of designing the wardrobe for the more recent films, which you've even referred to as "costume dramas"?

It's one thing to be able to draw something on a sheet of paper, and it's another thing to make it three-dimensional and functional, you know, *wearable*. But Trisha can do that. Trisha and I would sit and look at her

designs together, trying to figure out how they would work, *if* they would work in reality, and she astonished me at how much she could take from her imagination and bring into the real world in a functional way. That's a very real gift. It's very hard to pick the right fabric, to modify a design in such a way that it looks like it fits into a real world—not just some designer's concept of what the real world might be. She is a very positive force and the best I've ever worked with or ever seen.

Some reports indicate there are over 1,000 costumes in *Phantom Menace* alone. Is that right?

Yes, and that's the thing: just *making* that many costumes, getting them manufactured and getting them to the set on time, was a *huge* job. Trisha also had to work out all the colors of the costumes and how those colors would play against the colors on the sets. We had endless discussions about various shades of colors and what I

wanted, color-wise, on each set. She would take fabrics and stand them on the sets, or do mock-ups of various costumes to see if they would work on those sets. There were a lot of complex things that had to be dealt with on those films. Whether it was a beaded necklace or a holster for a pistol or a helmet, all of those things were her responsibility. The list went on and on.

So soon the world finally gets to see *The Force Awakens*. This time around, "the world" includes *you*, of all people. What are your thoughts about the film?

I'm very eager to see what they've done with it. You know, I'm not going to be around for 100 years. You reach the age of 70 and you begin to understand it would take a *decade* to do another trilogy of films, and when you're a husband and a father, you start to realize, *Star Wars* just needs someone else. But I'll definitely be there on opening day! 📺



When the “real” world collides with cosplay the result is cosplay pop culture! From music to sports, fashion to TV, and everything in between, you have just landed in the *Cosplay Culture Universe*.

STAR WARS

THE COSTUMERS AWAKEN.

Before bedecking the warmongering, madly Rococo denizens a long time ago in profoundly influential attire of his own creation, John Mollo couldn't tell a shaft from a sew-through.

It's not that the mustachioed, professorial Englishman, who would also eventually transform Iron Man into Charlie Chaplin and The Mandarin into Gandhi, had wiled away the first 45 years of his life mastering barnyard topiaries or pursuing proper preparations of gastronomic delicacies around the globe; instead, Mollo had published several well-regarded books about international military uniforms throughout the centuries. Which made him, in upstart auteur George Lucas' estimation, the perfect man to design the costumes for *Star Wars: A New Hope*.

For Mollo's efforts, he was awarded an Oscar, and also found himself on the fast track to a brand-new career (and a second Oscar), designing wardrobe for *Alien*, *The Three Musketeers*, and *Episode V* of the *Star Wars* franchise. Mollo's iconic costumes—more than 60 of them—are currently touring the galaxy (well, 12 cities in the United States, to be more specific) through 2020, part of the Smithsonian Institute's astonishing interactive exhibit, *Rebel, Jedi, Princess, Queen: Star Wars and the Power of Costume* (dates and locations are available at www.powerofcostume.si.edu).

It's common knowledge to *Star Wars* fandom that Lucas was inestimably influenced by Akira Kurosawa's 1956 film, *The Hidden Fortress*, with much of the space opera's aesthetics derived from feudal Japan, Samurai chic, and the monks of China and Tibet, but from where did the series' other, more outlandish costuming ideas, which have laid the gauntlet for the most seasoned cosplayers for nearly four decades, emerge? What exactly inspires someone like Mollo (or his successors, Aggie Guerard Rodgers and Nilo Rodis-Jamero on *Return of the Jedi*, Trisha Biggar on *Episodes I-III*, Michael Kaplan on *The Force Awakens*, with critical franchise assists from late concept artist Ralph McQuarrie and makeup maestro Stuart Freeborn) to create baroque mutants like Dice Ibegon or Elis Helrot, for example?

Darth Vader was envisioned by George Lucas as a “dark lord riding on the winds, with an evil essence about him,” according to Laela French, senior manager of archives and exhibits for the planned Lucas Museum of Narrative Art. Initial sketches by Ralph McQuarrie incorporated Vader's trademark breathing apparatus, while Mollo drew upon his expertise in military regalia, modeling Vader's infamous black helmet on the shimmering headgear of WWII-era Nazis, accented with a gas mask, a motorcycle suit, black leather boots, and an old monk's cloak



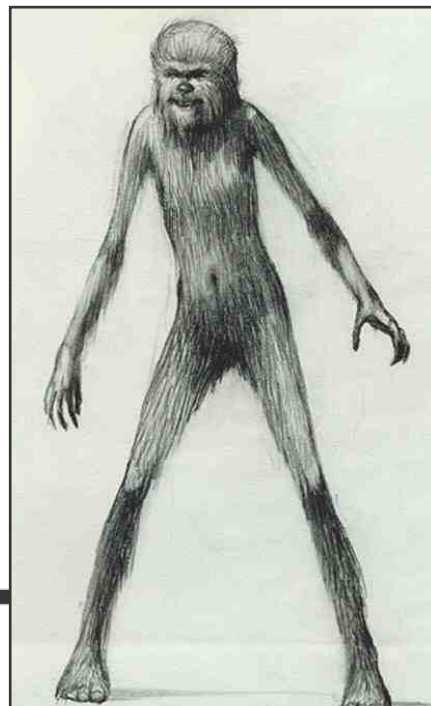
Courtesy of 20th Century Fox

found in the discard pile of a London costume shop.

Han Solo, “A riff right out of the Old West,” according to Mollo to incorporate a cream-colored Custer shirt, a black leather vest, red and yellow-striped leggings, and tall black boots. Instead of a Colt .45, this outer space gunslinger brandishes a laser blaster. According to Harrison Ford, Han Solo himself, the roguish intergalactic bootlegger almost ended up wearing “a huge Peter Pan, shawl-type” thing. “I said, ‘No, no, no. That's wrong. Can't wear that,’” Ford remembers. “So they took it off. George had a concept of the costume, but it was loose.”



The inspiration for **Chewbacca** stems from *Indiana Jones* canon, as relayed by Dr. Henry Jones (Sean Connery) in *The Last Crusade*. He says the intrepid archaeologist was named for the Jones family dog, but the canine connection goes back even further for Lucas, who recently revealed that the beloved Wookiee was, in fact, inspired by his very own pooch named, wait for it, Indy! Sourcing yak hair to create a furry knit bodysuit for actor Peter Mayhew,



Mollo created an exquisite costume that has “the essence of an animal,” says Lucas Museum’s French, “but civilized in the way some aliens are not.” Stuart Freeborn, who actually built the Chewbacca costume, working closely with McQuarrie, Mollo, and Lucas, was “trying to do a combination of a monkey, a dog, and a cat,” which is kind of purr-fect, except studio executives were deeply concerned about *Star Wars* receiving an R-rating from the MPAA – unless the Chewbacca character’s total nakedness was blanketed by a kilt or boxer shorts, divulges Mark (Luke Skywalker) Hamill. Yep, legendary screenwriter William Goldman was right: “Nobody knows anything.”



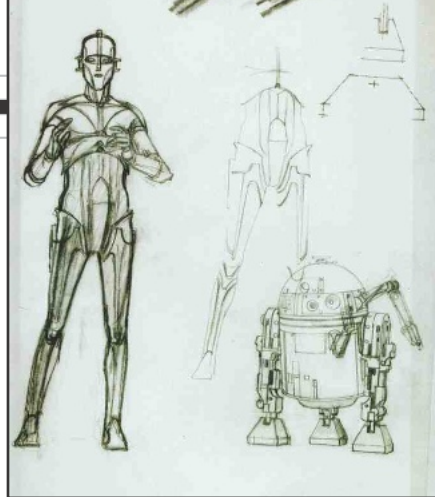
For Padmé’s wedding gown, costume designer Trisha Biggar, tasked with crafting the perfect trousseau for the series’ secret wedding, found unexpected inspiration in an Italian thrift shop, where she discovered an antique lace bedspread for but a few dollars, then stayed up all night hand-beading the piece into the lush marital garment that Natalie Portman wears onscreen.

A New Hope’s mammoth-sized and horned Bantha, one of Tatooine’s primary methods of transportation, was actually Mardi, a cosplaying female Asiatic elephant on loan from a Southern California theme park, transported to Death Valley (officially the hottest place on Earth), and gussied up in heavy,



thick fur to appear otherworldly.

As for the droids you’re looking for, Lucas, hobbled by a miniscule budget, commended production of *A New Hope* with some wardrobe elements still incomplete, much to the chagrin of Anthony Daniels, who has portrayed grigish, gold droid C3PO for nearly 40 years. On the first day of filming, smack dab in the middle of the blazing Tunisian desert, the costume—forged from fiberglass, vac-formed plastic, and aluminum—fell apart several times, eventually cracking, sending an angry shard directly into Daniels’ foot.



Any resemblance between the franchise’s **Stormtroopers** and genocidal Third Reich-ers was entirely intentional, according to Mollo. “George wanted the Imperial people to look efficient, totalitarian, fascist,” Mollo says, disclosing that his costumes make directs references to German military stylings, including tunics, tall boots, and headgear modeled on that worn by Nazi Germany’s elite Alpine troops. Cosplayers aiming

for Stormtrooping authenticity should probably know what they’re getting into. Mollo says, “The actors would get into a black, all-in-one leotard, over which the front and back of the body went together, the shoulders fitting onto the body, the arms sliding on, the top arm and bottom attached with black elastic, a belt around the waist with built-in suspenders to hold up the



legs, and then ordinary, domestic rubber gloves with a bit of latex shoved on the front and boots painted with white shoe dye.” Mollo acknowledges the process of outfitting the Stormtroopers was one of the strangest he’s experienced, adding, “All that matters is: it all worked.”

So what can cosplaying *Star Wars* fans expect from the costuming in *The Force Awakens*, designed by Michael Kaplan, who has designed wardrobe for *Blade Runner*, *Se7en*, *Fight Club*, and both J. J. Abrams *Star Trek* films? Kaplan, who conducts a lot of his business in thrift shops around the world, recently told *Vanity Fair*, “We reused many things, like taking old military gas masks and tubes and hoses and kind of applying them,” Kaplan said, refusing to indicate which characters he was discussing. Kaplan did clarify that not a single piece of costuming from the previous six *Star*



Courtesy of Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures

You Can Be a Jedi Master Too!

In a caper so confounding even Sherlock Holmes may have been left scratching his head, the humble but potent brown robe that swathed Obi-Wan Kenobi (played by Alec Guinness) in *Star Wars: A New Hope* went missing—in plain sight, as it turns out—for nearly three decades.

According to costume designer John Mollo, who won an Oscar for his work on *Episode IV*, George Lucas wanted the sage Jedi Master to appear as “part monk and part Samurai warrior.” However, the film’s \$11 million budget put a cap on some of Mollo’s efforts, forcing him to be resourceful. To outfit the guru who would counsel Luke Skywalker, Mollo reportedly hit the aisles of London costume shops, snatching up a generic, low-priced, hood-cloaked monk costume. There’s your tidbit of *Star Wars* trivia, but that’s not the end of the story.

When production on *Star Wars* wrapped, Mollo shipped his wardrobe racks to storage, a common industry practice, particularly for films hoped to launch a franchise, but the Kenobi robe went missing. (Mollo obviously didn’t go first class via Millennium Falcon.)



Courtesy of 20th Century Fox



Wars films were used on *The Force Awakens*, though he spent an entire day raiding the Lucas archives, going through sketches “to get the tone of the movie in my guts and veins.” As for specifics, Kaplan, like everyone else on the *Star Wars* production team, is fairly tight-lipped, though he does reveal that he used very distinct color palettes to differentiate between the film’s heroes and villains. The Empire dressed “in very cold blacks and grays and metallics,” with the Rebels in “khakis and olives and some oranges.” Kaplan also redesigned—in collaboration with film helmer J. J. Abrams—the Stormtroopers’ iconic armor, though for now, the full visual impact of those alterations remains covert.

In 2005, London costume shop Angels, a family-run operation since 1840 that has helped costume 36 Oscar-winning movies, discovered during routine inventory that they were, in fact, in possession of the ensemble in which Obi-Wan Kenobi nobly sacrificed his life—and had been renting it out to filmmakers and civilians for decades. Eagle-eyed filmgoers can identify the monk’s robe on a background actor in 1999’s *The Mummy*. Storeowners believe the authentic garb had been rented multiple times to *Star Wars* cosplayers.

So where is the robe in which Obi-Wan perished today? No one knows for certain, though it was purchased for a hefty \$104,000 by an anonymous telephone bidder at a 2007 auction. Our bet? Sarcev Quest, Emperor Palpatine’s personal spy, or maybe, uh, the Scorpion King.

Ben Kenobi’s snazzy stylings may be unavailable to Jedi aficionados, but Los Angeles-based, pop culture-oriented auction house Profiles in History announced September’s mammoth sale of *Star Wars* costumes and artifacts. Among the spoils: Princess Leia’s metal slave bikini worn during her captivity in Jabba the Hutt’s *Return of the Jedi* palace (expected to nab up to \$120,000), a prototype of the helmet worn by Death Vader in *The Empire Strikes Back* (with a price approaching \$50,000), and dozens of other one-of-a-kind items. Hopefully you’ve been saving up your druggats.



Cosplay Girl Q&A:

Mrs. Violet

She's a die-hard Trekkie—but with a soft spot for Stormtroopers

INTERVIEW BY MIKE BEDNARSKY

IMAGES: JOHANNES KREBS AND STEFANIE LANGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Cosplay Culture: How did you get bitten by the cosplay bug, and what appeals to you most about it?

Mrs. Violet: Years ago I saw a *Star Trek* dress uniform and fell in love with it. Last year I saw it again and decided to have made it for me. After the first photo shoot, I encountered other like-minded people. Cosplay has a special charm. You are not only dressed up, but you are also another character.

Who is your favorite character to cosplay?

I'm a big fan of Mr. Spock and the Vulcan species, therefore I like to look like a Vulcan. And I love pointed ears. I am not averse to other characters though. This was only my introduction to cosplay. I'm planning photo shoots of other characters.

Do you create your own costumes?

I can take pictures, paint, and draw—but I don't think I'll ever be good enough to tailor my own costumes. Those things are better when made by designers.

Are there event opportunities for cosplayers in Berlin?

There are opportunities in all of Germany, but it's not big like in the U.S. I really think that it is easier in the States to buy cosplay stuff. In Germany you pay a lot more money to create an outfit.

When did you become a Trekkie?

For as long as I can remember, I've been fascinated by outer space, so I watched space movies and TV shows. I take after my father, as he had previously watched this stuff. Growing up I watched the first *Star Trek* movies with Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock. This was followed by *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, and so on. I will never be bored

by the *Star Trek* universe; it's so extensive.

You've been photographed in a Stormtrooper outfit from *Star*



Photo: S. Lange



Photo: J. Krebs

Wars. Isn't that blasphemous for a Trekkie?

Once a Trekkie, always a Trekkie. The Stormtrooper uniform is stylish, and I love it—but only for the appearance!

So what do you predict the upcoming *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* will be like?

I hope that the new film isn't a bad imitation of the old movies.


Technology has become much better over the years, but I hope the story, characters, and actors are also good.

So you're going to go see it?

It's a must to watch the movie in theaters when it comes out in December.

You like to show off your pug on

Instagram. Is she a Trekkie too?

I think pugs are the best cosplayers. Each costume looks great on them. OK, more funny than great, but at least you can do everything with them! My pug Mrs. Murphy is a good photo model. I've taught her to work well in front of the camera. 

Facebook: mrs.kat.violet

Instagram: mrskatviolet

Model: Mrs. Violet

Hair and Makeup: Mrs. Violet

Dress: Shhh! Couture

Cosplay Culture #23 Correction:

Glenn Hetrick would like to correct a statement in the last issue. Optic Nerve Studios' work on *Buffy*, *Babylon 5*, and *The X-Files* won the Emmys prior to his owning the studio. He was fortunate to work on these shows, but out of respect to the Academy and the award itself he wanted us to clarify that he did not personally win the Emmys as mistakenly put forth in the article. *Cosplay Culture* regrets the error.



VADER WANTS

The Consuming Costuming Passion of the 501st Legion

ARTICLE BY RICH KIRBY

PHOTO COURTESY OF
MARK EDWARDS PHOTOGRAPHY

When the 501st Legion: Vader's Fist describes itself as the "world's definitive Imperial costuming organization," it is impossible to argue otherwise. First off, there's that word, "Imperial." The Legion is a Star Wars "bad guys" club exclusively, make no mistake; stalwart Jedi, plucky princesses, or warm and fuzzy Wookiees need not apply. Secondly, the 501st is a *costuming* group, and decidedly *not* a cosplay group.

Scott Allen, the commanding officer for the group's Southern California Garrison, breaks that down: "A costuming group's passion is recreating the costume as canon or screen-accurate as possible. Cosplayers are more into acting out or portraying the characters."

So like their equally assiduous counterparts who recreate con-

flicts from the Civil War or Roman Britain, the 501st are battle-field reenactors, only from a war that has yet to be fought, or to maintain canonical continuity, one fought "long ago in a galaxy far, far away."

Counting nearly 8,000 members worldwide, the Legion has shown there is no shortage of Star Wars fans happy to place costume before character. Simply tracking and managing so many members for such an active fan group should be overwhelming, but not for Vader's Fist. Their division of personnel into regional garrisons, and further into local squads represents an Imperial order of battle and troop organization not seen since the Second Battle of Endor.

Members of the 501st craft their own costumes in strict adherence to the detailed guidelines the group provides, and most wannabe Troopers take several tries before the gear they've creat-



YOU!

ed makes the cut. It's not as though the Legion does not provide ample assistance and support, however.

"We are very easy-going," Allen emphasizes. "We have armor parties that are open to the public, to show [those interested] how easy the costumes are to build. Not to build it *for* them, but to answer their questions."

The questions arise, no doubt, from the many charts and lists that comprise the Legion's Costume Reference Libraries (CRLs). These arrays of outfits and accessories are indexed, coded, sub-divided, and cross-referenced in a way that would





do JCPenney proud. The libraries also provide complementary visual guides for every bandolier and codpiece with clear, and rigid, guidelines.

For example, the visual guide for the cuff of the left glove of a Snow Trooper Commander stipulates that, to ensure compliance, it shall have attached “a small compad approx 1.5” x 1.5” with the outer section slightly curved, and the inner section straight. The compad has a circular center section, about 3/4” high, and topped with a small silver disk, slightly smaller than the center section in diameter.”

Yikes. But might not such keen—some might politely quibble

“fanatical”—attention to costume detail discourage the famously free-spirited members of the cosplay community for whom a Darth Vader/Gonzo the Muppet mash-up is the height of hilarity and creative expression? On the contrary: “Cosplayers see the costumers,” Allen observes, “and want to step up their game.”

It also helps that the Galactic Empire's military table of organization and equipment is as deep as it is, so there is no shortage of uniforms for cosplayers and costumers to step up and into.

Certainly the most popular costumes are those for the First Imperial Stormtrooper detachments, the iconic porcelain paja-ma'd grunts and their myriad sub-divisions. CRLs are included





dren's hospitals.”

And a whole lot more. With a list of international charitable organizations longer than a Sith Saberstaff, including the March of Dimes, American Red Cross, Make-A-Wish Foundation, and the Salvation Army, the group has more than earned themselves the moniker “the bad guys who do good.”

What began as a costuming group, Allen notes, is now primarily a charity group: “We just spend so much time helping people.”

The 501st Legion is, in truth, the out-and-out leading force in fan-based charity events. To date the group has spent over 30,000 hours in costume as

for the standard issue which can be seen in the franchise's feature films through variations found only in non-movie media, such as Shadow Troopers (featured on the cover of this *Cosplay Culture* issue) to the genuinely obscure zombified Death Troopers (from the Expanded Universe novel of the same name).

Beyond the Stormtroopers, regiments and military orders from the many novels, comics, books, TV series, video games, and of course, the feature films, are all represented and fair game. Fancy playing an AT-AT driver? Clone Trooper Lieutenant? Sovereign Protector (those big guys in the red robes who had the Emperor Palpatine's back in *Return of the Jedi*)? There's a CRL for that.

The 501st also enlists the characters who aren't “regular military.” Tusken Raiders, bounty hunters, even the Mos Eisley Police Department (who, one presumes, still haven't found those droids they were looking for...) are represented with a detailed CRL. In short, if it's a Star Wars character not on the side of the angels, the 501st Legion has an excruciatingly detailed Costume Reference Library for it.

But beyond their zealous attention to costuming detail, what really sets the 501st apart from the average weekend cosplayer or reeanactor is their charity work.

Allen remembers: “In the very beginning, the late '90s, we just showed up at movie premieres. Then we started receiving requests. Now we work with the American Cancer Society and local chil-






part of events that have raised tens of millions of dollars.

In recognition of their good works, Lucasfilm has bestowed upon the 501st the greatest honor a devoted fan can receive: their made-up group has become canon. Best-selling author Timothy Zahn sought and received approval to include the 501st Legion in his 2004 Star Wars novel, *Survivor's Quest*, and the bad boys of Vader's Fist have been showing up in official Star Wars books, toys, and video games ever since.

The 501st Legion is certainly the gold standard among both Star Wars cosplayers AND costumers, but they are not the only one. If you are inclined to use the light side of the Force, then the 501st's sister organization, the Rebel Legion (rebellegion.com), may be more your cup of caf. And if your morality straddles that gray area occupied by bounty hunters like Boba Fett, then we direct your attention to the Mandalorian Mercs Costume Club (mandalorianmercs.org); it is the largest global Star Wars costume organization that is primarily non-canon in nature.

But head over to 501st.com if you have just been swayed to the dark side—a charitable version of the dark side, that is. 

STAR WARS

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STAR WARS CELEBRATION 2015

The Force was strong in Anaheim last April—were you there?

ARTICLE BY MARC DRAVEN PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVANN SREY PHOTOGRAPHY

What could you possibly say to describe the excitement of the *Star Wars*

Celebration fans when the doors opened to the public in Anaheim, Calif. in April 2015? There were people from all over the planet coming to join the event. Almost every major actor from all six of the films released to date, some surprise guests to debut the new teaser for the upcoming film *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* due out in November, as well as voice actors from the cartoon series, costume designers, animators, prop directors, collectors, and so much more!

There were dozens of Luke Skywalkers, Princess Leias, and Han Solos in attendance. Those



characters were portrayed for their unwavering popularity and familiarity, but also as a wink to the trio's upcoming return to the silver screen—and Carrie Fisher's visit to the Celebration (Billy Dee Williams, Anthony Daniels, Ray Park, the man under the Darth Maul makeup, and the Emperor himself Ian McDiarmid all swung by too). There was a panel dedicated to the return of a different beloved *Star Wars* creation: season two of *Star Wars Rebels*. The show focuses on early rebellions against the Empire, and SWC visitors were the first to see episodes from season two. But the emphasis was mostly on the original saga because that's where it all began- or didn't, but you know what we mean.







Star Wars props and costumes were showcased, with in-depth discussions about the elements that helped give Star Wars its timeless, accessible appeal. Slideshows were presented, with the revealing of production artifacts rarely seen even by the most eager of Padawan. Lucasfilm executive editor J.W. Rinzler and Brandon Alinger, author of *Star Wars Costumes: The Original Trilogy*, discussed the costumes of the 1970s and '80s films, with thorough recollections of how easy or difficult the outfits were to work with during filming. Droids, as non-humans, blend the lines between costume and character. Fan favorite R2-D2 naturally received a lot of attention; the R2-D2 Builders' Club gave fans a history lesson, and construction lesson, on R2 and all of its bells and whistles.

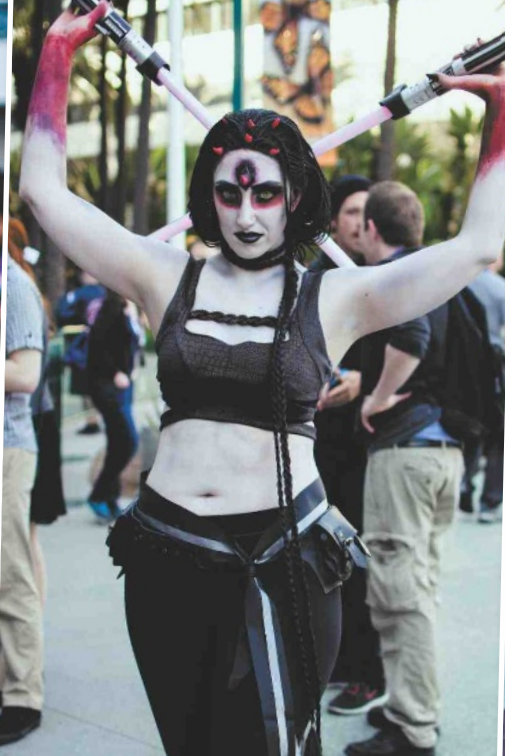




The Star Wars Expanded Universe spawned Star Wars theme accessories in almost every capacity imaginable. Star Wars fans who are bowlers, bartenders, and baritone saxophone players can all get their fix in one way or another. Star Wars Celebration is just as praised because it aims to reach the devotees of all corners in the galaxy. LEGO Star Wars is the strongest example of this, and that realm celebrated surpassing the 15 year mark with a look back on how LEGO Star Wars has grown since 1999. Duncan Jenkins, Star Wars writer/editor and contributor to StarWars.com, as well as James Burns, co-owner of the UK website Jedi News, spearheaded the presentation.

It was an out-of-this-world ride, and a different kind of ride will ground your favorite Star Wars characters and machines when Disney Parks opens up its much-anticipated Disneyland leg right there in Anaheim. A Millennium Falcon attraction is the first thing promised as part of the







park. Construction is slated to begin in 2016, so salivating fans will have to tide themselves over with the new films and merchandise until then!

Whether you attended the 2015 *Star Wars* Celebration to see why Draven's Ink-Fusion Empire is "Where the worlds of tattooing and pop culture collide," or you went to see any other faction of the *Star Wars* galaxy, it was truly an amazing experience. Be sure to remind your friends who missed out this time to be there next year. And if for some strange reason you start second-guessing yourself, ignore that hesitation and join the Jedi at the *Star Wars* Celebration! Get into your Millennium Falcon and get there! "It's the ship that made the Kessel Run in less than 12 parsecs," after all. 

starwarscelebration.com



Ink-Fusion Empire Presents

THE **STAR WARS**

TATTOO GALLERY

ARTICLE AND IMAGES BY MARC DRAVEN

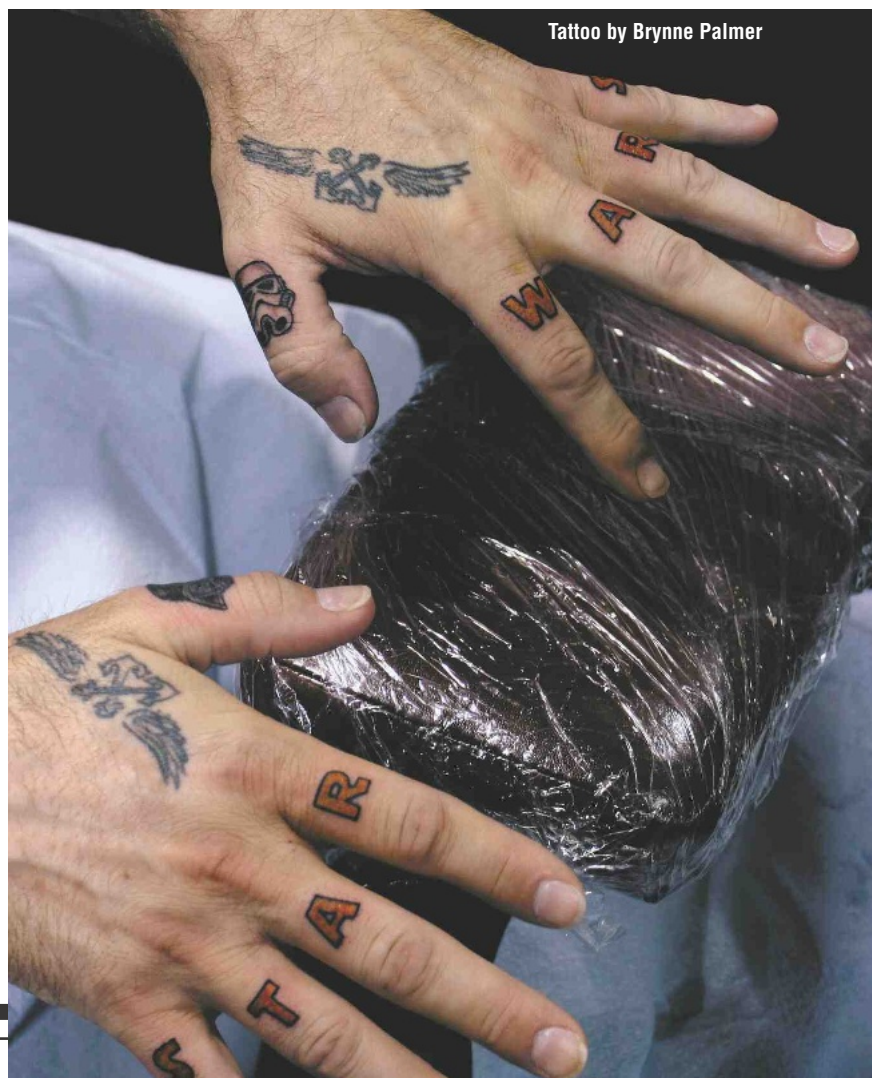
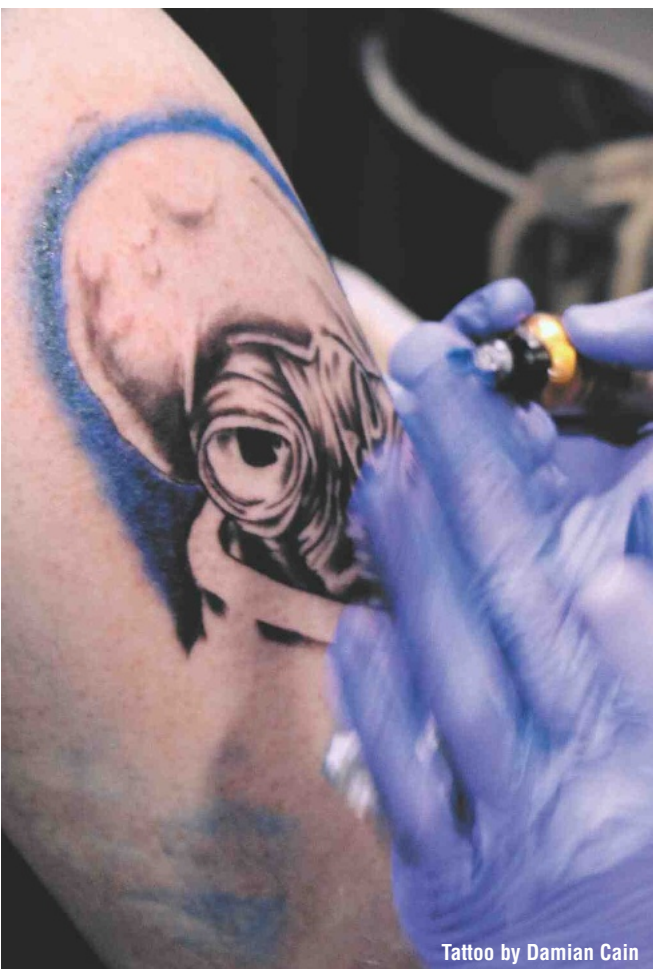
There was one of the largest gatherings of professional tattoo artists at the 2015 *Star Wars* Celebration. From Marc Draven's Ink-Fusion Empire, 46 licensed Lucasfilm Ltd tattoo artists were nonstop the entire time, with a waiting list for people who were hoping to get something permanent to commemorate their visit.

If you could think of something *Star Wars* related, it was most likely being tattooed. Everything from classic trilogy characters, to Jar Jar Binks, and even the first ever tattoo of the crushed, melted helmet of Darth Vader himself. Every tattoo artist who joined the event was inspected by the Anaheim Board of Health, and was hand-selected, to ensure that not only were the best artists on staff for *Star Wars* related art, but also every health code was being followed for the safety of the clients and artists alike. Ink-Fusion Empire artists are the only ones ever licensed by Lucasfilm Ltd.

Not only did several thousands of fans visit, but also the likes of Daniel Logan (young Boba Fett in *Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*) and the new leader of the Force, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* director J.J. Abrams. Along with the live tattooing, there was also the release of Shane Turgeon's *The Force in the Flesh Volume 2*. The

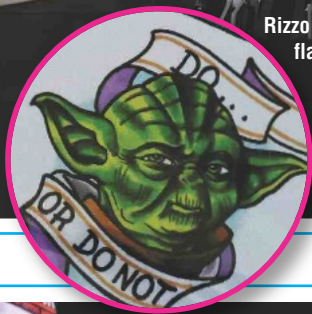


Tattoo by
Jon Fud
Gearheart

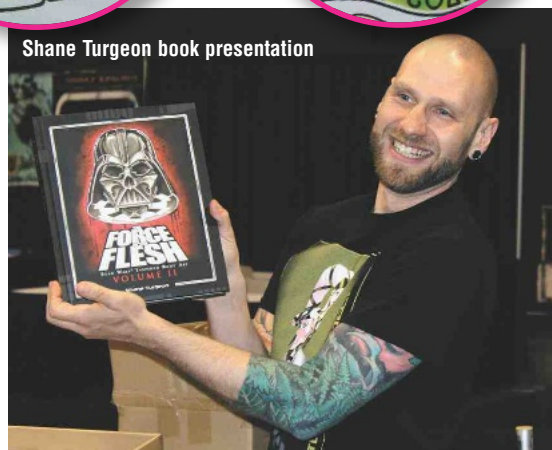




Rizzo Boo Lash
flash art



Lu Sky Walker
from Wyld
Chyld Tattoo
Pittsburgh



Shane Turgeon book presentation



Jersey Jay Wymbs'
booth



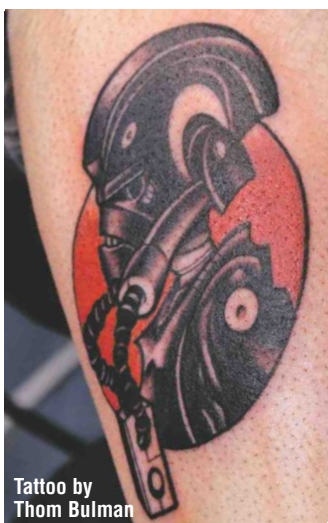
Tattoo by Mike Groves



Tattoo by Piero Bockos



Shannon Ritchie




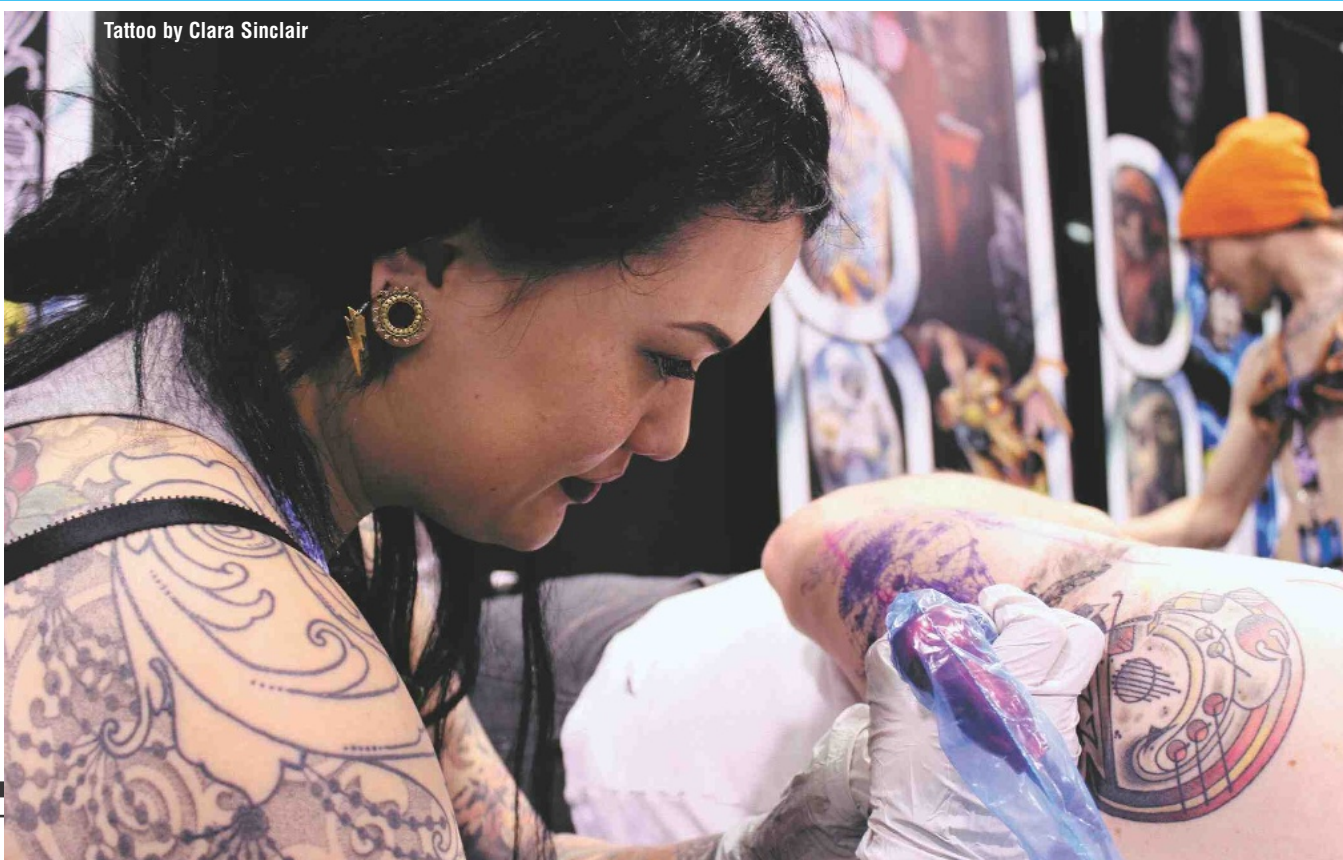
Tattoo by Thom Bulman



Adam Hays and Vinny Romanelli's Red Rocket Tattoo booth

book is compiled of Star Wars related tattoos done from over 42 artists across the globe. The first volume was released at the 2007 Star Wars Celebration in L.A. Shane also coordinated the tattoo contest and art show. This gave fans with tattoo work related to Star Wars a chance to show their ink off and win awards for the best ink of the weekend!

Turn the page for more, and may the Force be with you. 



Tattoo by Clara Sinclair



THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPACE COSTUME FROM THE MOON TO TATOOINE



By BILL WAYTOWICH



The race to the moon and other planets has been depicted in movies and film for over 100 years now. Our species has a natural curiosity and desire to travel to other planets which will perhaps one day be our only hope for survival. Populating the universe seems to be implanted in our DNA for a specific reason. Aliens and space travel movies were especially popular during the Cold War era. Only a few years later Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon for the first time in 1969. An astronaut sent to inhospitable Mars will be our next great voyage. There are a plethora of space films out there. Below are some important classics and pivotal movies about space travel and the iconic costumes that made them great.

A Trip to the Moon (1902)

This film was a 14 minute silent film masterpiece created by imaginative French director and master magician Georges Méliès. Widely regarded as the first space travel film ever, it's a lighthearted yet whimsical satire criticizing the conservative scientific community of its time. It was inspired by Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) and the novel by H. G. Wells *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). Méliès was a one man band as he wrote the script, acted as the lead role, designed the sets/costumes, directed, photographed, and produced the film! He hired acrobats from the Folies Bergère to play the alien, ant-like Selenite characters. The famous scene of the lunar capsule landing in the eye of the moon has made its mark in cinematic history forever. Méliès later wrote about the Selenite costumes saying: "Their shells, heads, feet, every-

The early space classic *A Trip to the Moon*.



The ant-like Selenite aliens in the film *A Trip to the Moon*.

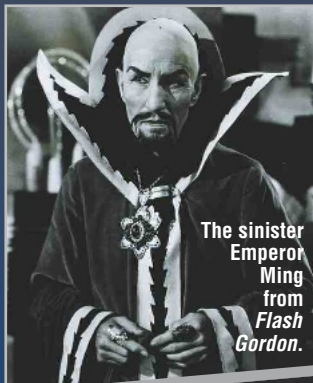


valley where Flash and his entourage first land. The exception is the terrifying papier-mâché dragon with lobster claws that inhabits the *Tunnel of Terror* in chapter two; with the addition of horns and a wall of flame, it doubles as the *Sacred Fire Dragon* in chapter nine. The costumes of Ming's empire is a mix of Space Age tunics, medieval robes, and Roman centurion armor for the men, and harem outfits for the women. The costumes (and most of the set dressing) are straight from Universal's warehouses, but the mixture of styles isn't that far off from Raymond's comic strip design, which also borrowed freely from distant times and places from

Earth's history. The space classic *Buck Rogers* began its iconic space reign a few years later in 1939.

Captain Video and His Video Rangers (1949-55)

Captain Video was the first American science fiction television series. Set in the 21st century, Captain Video had a base on a mountain top with a young assistant called the Video Ranger. The series was extremely popular with children and adults but not so much with the critics. The plots often involved wildly implausible



The sinister Emperor Ming from *Flash Gordon*.



Flash Gordon in the serial *The Planet of Peril*.

thing was made specifically, and in consequence, expensive. I myself made the models done in clay; the plaster moulding and the costumes were made by a maker of special masks, used to working with papier-mâché..." *A Trip to the Moon* is truly one of the earliest movie masterpieces of all-time!

Flash Gordon (1936)

Many a kid grew up watching *Flash Gordon* which has since become a cult classic with fans of science fiction and fantasy. Flash Gordon was the hero of a space opera adventure comic strip originally drawn by artist Alex Raymond. The *Flash Gordon* comic strip has been translated into a wide variety of media, including motion pictures, television, and animated series.

Most of Flash Gordon's encounters with aliens is on the planet Mongo which is ruled by the sinister Emperor Ming. Flash battles with familiar animals, supported by the attachment of some outer space bling, or small animals filmed against miniature sets to make them appear gigantic, like the dragon-sized finned iguanas that prowl the



The uniforms for Captain Video and his sidekick were U.S. Army surplus with lightning bolts sewn on the front. Captain Video's nemesis, Dr. Pauli wore a gangster style pinstripe suit costume. Other scenes depict cowboy costumes as well as the tunics similar to Roman style dress! One of the more interesting costumes is the giant robot Tobor (robot spelled backwards) who comes under the control of a young girl who is determined to use the subservient machine against the Video Rangers. Interesting enough, the *Captain Video* series is mentioned on the first episode of *The Honeymooners* TV series.

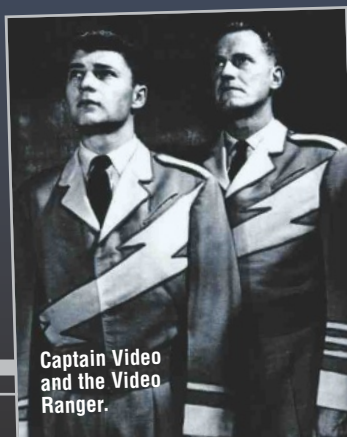
The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)

In the movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, an alien named Klaatu with his mighty robot Gort land their spacecraft on Cold War-era Earth. Klaatu is on a mission of peace. Gort appears to be constructed from a single piece of bendable metal. During the movie, actor Lock Martin, who played the

inventions made from cheap props. However, some of the scripts were written by a few major science fiction writers of the time.



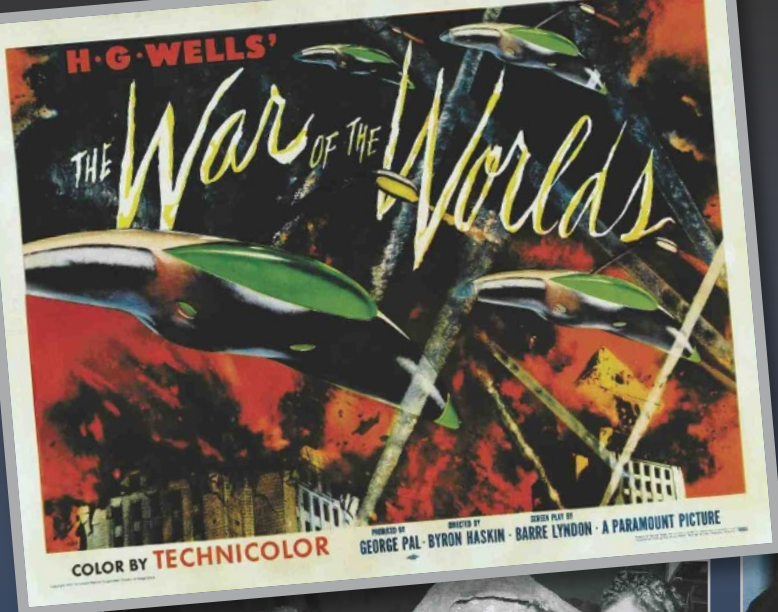
The robot Gort from *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.



Captain Video and the Video Ranger.



Captain Video featured on *The Honeymooners*.



Charles Gemora fits into *The War of the Worlds* alien costume.

robot, was in a silver-colored thick foam rubber suit that was designed and built by the film's art director Addison Hehr. Two Gort suits were created, shown alternately from the front or back so that the robot could appear seamless depending on the camera angle. The supposedly solid metal suit did crease when Lock Martin walked; this was impossible to overcome at the time. A fiberglass Gort was used for close-ups such as when he fired his laser beam weapon or when the scene did not call for him to move. Klaatu eventually tells the best scientists of the world that the aliens have watched them for centuries and humans have posed no potential harm until now. In a threatening address, he tells our species that we need to stop nuclear testing immediately if we want to have a future.

***The War of the Worlds* (1953)**

From the brilliant mind of H.G. Wells came this vision of Earth under aerial alien siege. This time the aliens decided to wipe out our planet instead. Los Angeles is hit hard from Martian saucers and once they landed, the aliens were really grotesque looking. The special effects budget for this film was about \$1.5 million. In the 1950s, this was a lot of money! In fact, *The War of the Worlds* actually won the 1953 Oscar for special effects. The movie wisely avoids showing us too much of the Martians themselves; the crea-

ture costumes are not nearly as good as the model war machines or the optical effects associated with them. The film's art director, Albert Nozaki, who designed the Martian, is seen briefly during the tense scene in which a cylinder crashes next to an abandoned farmhouse where Doctor Forrester and Sylvia have sought refuge. The elaborate alien prop was outfitted with an enormous three color eye, long arms with suction cup fingers, and pulsating veins throughout. The unforgettable alien suit was built and worn by Charles Gemora, who was a veteran of the Paramount makeup department since 1932. He was best known in Hollywood for his many film roles in a gorilla suit. The Martian was a rush job made from chicken wire, latex rubber, and tubing. It barely held together during the shoot.

***It! The Terror from Beyond Space* (1958)**

In 1973, the first manned expedition to Mars is decimated by an



The alien from the movie *The War of the Worlds*.



Ray Corrigan plays the hideous creature in the movie *It! The Terror from Beyond Space*.

unknown life form which stows away on the rescue ship before it comes back to Earth. Ray Corrigan played the monster, but he wouldn't travel to get measured for the suit, so makeup and special effects artist Paul Blaisdell had to sculpt the head over his own plaster bust. When Paul completed the outfit, the body of the creature was OK because Corrigan had sent over a pair of his long underwear, which Paul built the suit over. When the mask was placed on Corrigan's head, his bulbous chin stuck out through the monster's mouth, so the makeup man improvised and painted his chin to look like a tongue instead. Paul also ended up cutting the eyes out but then the head of the production department demanded the monster have eyes. Paul built the eyes but they weren't able to move. When the producers saw the eyes, they thought they were the worst eyes they had ever

seen. So, Blaisdell decided to take latex and fill them in with rubber. This suit was funny too because Corrigan couldn't see too well and had to actually lift the mask to readjust the eye holes during filming.

***Lost in Space* (1965-68)**

In the year 1997, Earth is suffering from massive overpopulation. Doctor John Robinson, his wife Maureen, their children Judy, Penny, and Will, and Major Don West are selected to go to the third planet in the Alpha Centauri star system to establish a colony. The ship becomes hopelessly lost and it now becomes a fight for survival as the crew tries to find their way back home.

The costumes used on this TV series were made by Western Costume Co., according to the designs of the series art director Paul Zastupnevich. The silver space suits used in the





The crew from *Lost in Space* sport their silver space gear.

first season were actually modified racing drivers' fireproof aluminum suits. These suits were extremely hot and uncomfortable for the cast, who in between shots would drop down the tops so they could at least keep cool from the waist up. In the third season, the cast wore spacesuits made from a new fabric called Metlon-with-Mylar, which was an aluminum fiber coated with Mylar. This new fabric was



The *Lost in Space* cast don their stylish velour tunics.



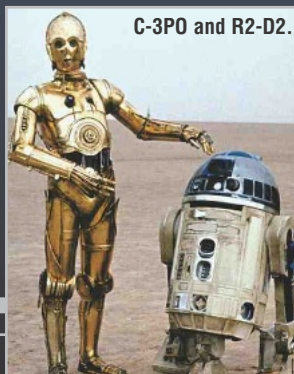
The gang from the original *Star Trek* TV series.

more flexible and was not as hot. For the regular costumes used in all three seasons, Zastupnevich chose velour for the tunics. The pants were generally made of a stretch fabric called Elastique which allowed the actors room for stunts.

Star Trek (1966-69)

This TV series featured the adventures of the USS Enterprise, representing the United Federation of Planets on a five year mission in outer space to explore new worlds, seek new life and new civilizations, and to "boldly go where no man has gone before."

Bill Theiss was the costume designer on the original *Star Trek* and for the first years of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. He was responsible for the iconic Starfleet uniform designs that are so often copied these days. Although the standard command division uniform tunics looked gold on most color TV sets, the costumes were actually lime green. The greenish hue of the command tunics can be seen more clearly in the third season, when the fabric used for the tunics was changed from satin velour to a double knit fabric that reflected the set lighting better. The dress uniforms, made of a silk material, were always clearly green by comparison and some darker green jumpsuits and wraparound tunics that were



C-3PO and R2-D2.

more clearly seen, seemed to confirm that all the gold to green variations were part of the same color scheme. The so-called beige uniforms which originated with *The Cage*, were ironically a much more yellow color but likewise appeared beige or pinkish under the lights.

Fred Beauregard Phillips was the makeup artist for the original *Star Trek* TV series. He mentioned that Spock's ears had to be molded daily in order to look right for the camera. These appliances were made of an expensive form of latex and they tore easily when being removed at the end of the day. Blessed with an unlimited budget and abundance of materials, he designed the original Klingons, Romulans, and all the other early *Star Trek* aliens.

Star Wars (1977)

The blockbuster movie *Star Wars* took the world by storm in 1977 and became a pop culture phenomenon. Luke Skywalker joins forces with a Jedi Knight, a confident pilot, a Wookiee, and two droids to save the universe from the Empire's world-destroying battle station, while also attempting to rescue Princess Leia from the evil and ruthless Darth Vader.

From the mind of creator George Lucas, to the concept artists who put those ideas to

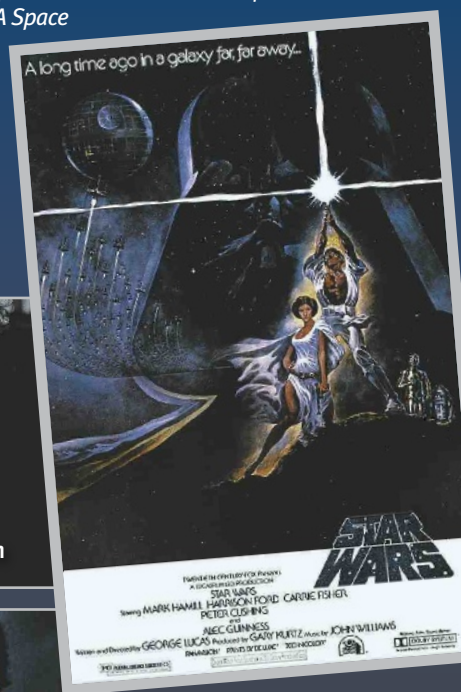
paper, to the artisans and costume designers who produced the fantastical, iconic wardrobes, *Star Wars* was a complex undertaking and it proved the importance of top-notch costume-making. John Mollo's path to becoming a double Academy Award winning costume designer (*Star Wars*, and then *Gandhi* in 1983) was born out of a devoted love of European and American military uniforms. He was a master at developing designs that looked like real clothes instead of costumes.

Lucas hired legendary makeup supervisor Stuart Freeborn, recruited because of his work on the apes in the Dawn of Man sequence in Stanley Kubrick's classic, 2001: A Space Odyssey. He assembled the Chewbacca costume with a combination of real yak and rabbit hair knitted into a base of mohair. The biggest problem during production, was when the actor's body heat in the latex mask caused his face to detach from the costume's



Star Wars makeup artist Stuart Freeborn works on Chewbacca.

Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, and Han Solo forge ahead in *Star Wars*.



eyes, making them look separate from the mask. Freeborn was also responsible for creating Jabba the Hutt, the insightful Yoda, also the Mos Eisley Cantina alien bar scene.

LE



LEEANNA VAMP

Behind the Scenes with the 'Ghoul of Your Dreams'

ARTICLE BY IAN FREEMAN
PHOTOS BY STEVE PRUE



Typically, the fear from hearing something go bump in the night sends your teeth chattering and your hair standing on end, but if you're lucky the creature that's been stalking you from the shadows just might be the lovely LeeAnna Vamp. LeeAnna Vamp (yes, that's her real name) has been sending pulses racing for years be it as a fashion model, actress, host of the popular web shows *ilovenerdgirls* and *Best Fiends Forever*, or by bringing some of the creatures that haunt our dreams to life in her cosplay. She grew up loving everything from TV, games, fashion, and toys but it is the spooky and the sinister that has a special place in her heart, and it's a love that she enjoys sharing with her fans.

While LeeAnna, affectionately dubbed the Ghoul of Your Dreams, loves the scary, she is also a big fan of sci-fi and has a long-standing love affair with the original sci-fi opera *Star Wars*. With the release of the new *Star Wars* film coming up, *Cosplay Culture* decided to catch up with the Vampress herself about what scares her and spurs her, plus the faces new and old back in that galaxy "far, far away."





Cosplay Culture: So you're really into horror, sci-fi, and fantasy.

LeeAnna Vamp: At first these things were an escape for me and now it has become my world and my life so I am even that much more in love with it!

Do you call yourself a nerd because of those interests?

I guess I never really considered myself a nerd growing up, I just liked the things I liked and didn't realize that I was a nerd. I've always had friends that were into the same things as me so it was normal.

How did you get into the dark and macabre?

This comes from my love of Halloween and all things creepy. I've always been fascinated with the darker side of things: vampires, witches, ghost and ghouls have always been a huge part of who I am! From my style to my soul, I will forever be dark!

Is there something out there that scares you?

It takes a lot to *really* scare me but one thing I am not fond of are tiny house spiders. I actually have a pet tarantula named Booty so it's a bit strange, but the little ones freak me out. They sneak up on you and I don't much care for surprise spider attacks!

Name the scariest character you've cosplayed.

The scariest character that I have done is probably Freddy [Krueger] but my version is definitely a lot less scary than Robert Englund's. And a bit more leggy ;)

How did you get into cosplay?

I actually started as a fan attending San Diego Comic-Con over 14 years ago. I was doing my show *ilovenerdgirls* and after seeing so many amazing costumed humans at the cons I thought it would be a lot more fun to do interviews and talk with people dressed up. So I decided to just go for it and make a few costumes.

What was your first cosplay?

I started off with a Mario and my Chewbacca Wookini. I had so much fun that I was instantly hooked!

Do you conceptualize and/ or create your cosplays?

My method when it comes to costumes really varies. Sometimes I make the entire costume, sometimes I make the costume and commission props, and other times I collaborate with other designers and costume makers to create an outfit. While my





method may vary, one thing that remains the same is that I always put my own spin on a character. It's always the "Vamp" take on any character I do!

And what are the steps to that process?

It usually starts from a character popping into my mind and then I do a little research on the character, especially when there are multiple versions of that character. I then decide on what route I want to take and how I will make it my own. I love cosplaying badass male characters with weapons, so there's the process of adapting it to fit the female form. One that I really love wearing is my Femtrooper. *Star Wars* is one of my favorite things ever and being all armored up makes me feel like such a badass! It is also really well-received. The best reaction is from the kids. I love seeing their faces light up, because to them, you are the real deal.

What cosplay was the most difficult to execute?

The costume that was the most difficult to create was probably my Ciri from *The Witcher 3* [*:Wild Hunt*]. I had to tackle lots of new techniques and teach myself along the way. There were a few hiccups and redos while making it. I love the character, so that always really helps when you get to the point in the project where you may want to give up. I worked on it for about a month in between travel and jobs.

The cosplay world is ever-expanding and generating a lot of mainstream success.

I think that having more attention on the world of cosplay is definitely helping, [*Cosplay Culture*] is a great example of that. With so many conventions happening all over the world, fans making and showing off so many incredible costumes, *this* world has definitely grown in really great ways.

What is your biggest takeaway, as a notable cosplayer?

One of my favorite things about cosplay-ing I would have to say is when people tell me that I have inspired them in some way. I never thought what I am doing would have such a big impact on others. When people come up to me and say "your work has helped me...", it means the world to me! The fact that what I do can help others is amazing and I want people to know that there aren't any rules that are set in stone when it comes to cosplay. There is no right or wrong way to do it. If you're having fun, you're doing it right!

What is *Star Wars Girls*?

Star Wars Girls is one of my shows where my co-host Stacey [Bender] and I nerd out on everything *Star Wars*. From fashion to fan caves we basically cover it all. You can check out all the *Star Wars Girls* episodes on my YouTube [channel] at [youtube.com/Vamp](https://www.youtube.com/Vamp).





What sparked your fascination with *Star Wars*?

Everything about *Star Wars*! I remember seeing it for the first time, and the second the music started I was captivated. I have always been fascinated with space as well, so before I even knew what it was about I was already intrigued.

Name your favorite character in *Star Wars*.

Chewie.

And your favorite *Star Wars* character to cosplay?

Femtrooper bikini version, which I do realize offers little protection in the abdomen, but I feel like such a badass in that armor!

If you were living in the galaxy far, far away, what side would you be on?

I would be a merc, kicking ass and taking names. Helping those who need it and bringing justice throughout the galaxy. I guess you could say I'd be the Robin Hood of the galaxy, but a little more badass.

You must be excited for *The Force Awakens*.

Words cannot express how happy and excited I am for the new film. I cried during the first trailer!

Why do you think *Star Wars* captivates people so much?

It's filled with characters that we all identify with. It's an escape from reality and for so many of us, myself included, it has been a part of most of our lives. I am a member of the 501st, which celebrates *Star Wars* and also does a lot for charity. *Star Wars* is much more than a movie franchise, it's a world I am so happy to be a part of!

When was the first time you saw *A New Hope*?

When I was a kid, my brothers and I used to watch it all the time. Pretty sure we ruined that VHS tape. Oh geez, VHS. So yeah, it was a while ago.

What do you have planned for the future?


I am a huge Lara Croft fan and I will be doing her black and yellow scuba suit outfit and I am super excited



Hair and Makeup: Red Dodge
Photo Assistant: Kurt Lindner
Location: Orange County Photo
Studio Rental

for it. Also in the
works are Jean
Grey and Psylocke.

**So your own saga
continues.**

Just giving you fiends a
heads-up, the Vamp
brand is going to take
over the world! [Laughs
maniacally.] 

LeeAnnaVamp.com
Facebook: LeeAnnaVamp
Instagram: LeeAnnaVamp
Twitter: Vamp
YouTube: Vamp



VAMP

LEFMANA

COSPLAY
CULTURE



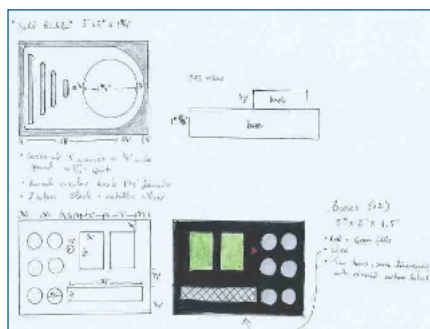
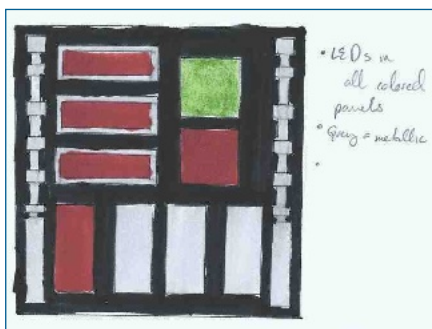


SIMPLICITY VILLAINOUS VIXEN ACCESSORIES

DESIGNED BY EFFY SEWS COSPLAY ► PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF M PHOTOGRAPHY

Ever wonder what you would look like as a Death Star burlesque babe? This accessory by Simplicity Patterns makes it possible for you to give off just the right amount of that Dark Side vibe. Follow the instructions to design a “killer” control box, a sleek breathing apparatus and all. It'll take a lot of small parts, attention to detail, and a little bit of elbow grease, but it's worth the time and effort. It's great to be the empress of the Empire, so enjoy it, but be cautious of your power—the Dark Side of the Force is sexy in this one.

INSTRUCTIONS:



TIP: Before starting, read through these instructions and familiarize yourself with the materials. This will make the whole project go smoother!

STEP 1 – TEMPLATES

For downloadable templates go to cosplayculture.com/vixen.

Make two copies of all four templates. These will be your patterns for your molds and cut outs. Glue the templates to a manila folder. Using a utility knife and a metal-edged ruler, cut around the outer edge of one of each of the Control Box templates. You will use these templates to carve the balsa wood molds and eventually, to cut out the Control Boxes. For the Chest Control Box, carefully cut out each colored button. Do not cut out the silver frame around the three red buttons. Cut a silver frame out of the second Chest Control Box template for your foam piece. For the second Control Knob Box template, cut out the inner silver piece, cutting out the slots and small dot. Do not cut out the large circle. For each of the Belt Control Boxes, cut out the two green buttons and punch small holes to mark placement of the knobs and LED. Cut the silver rectangle out of the extra template for your foam piece.

STEP 2 – BALSA WOOD MOLDS

NOTE: The Control Box Molds are slightly deeper than the TranspArt needs to be to allow enough extra to trim away irregular edges.

Materials:

- One small (14" x 19") sheet of Worbla's® TranspArt transparent thermoplastic
- NOTE: Additional TranspArt will be needed if you wish to make test pieces.
- Balsa Wood: 3/4" wide x 3/4" long x 1 1/2" deep for the Chest Control Box; 2" wide x 3" long x 1 1/2" deep for the Control Knob Box; 2" wide x 3" long x 2" deep for the Belt Control Boxes; scraps of 1/8" thick wood for the Button molds.
- Brush-on Translucent Stained Glass Paint: Red and Green.
- Brush-on Enamel Paint: Black and Silver.
- Spray Paint: Metallic Silver and Clear Gloss.
- Metal Hardware: Twelve Stainless Steel Thumb Screws with a head diameter of 5/16" and a head height of 3/16"; Two 1/8" diameter x 3 1/2" long Aluminum Rods and the following 1/4" diameter, unthreaded Aluminum Spacers to fit the Rods: Two Spacers 1" long; Two Spacers 1/4" long; Ten Spacers 1/8" long.
- Black 1 1/2" Simplicity®/MD Belting: Waist measurement plus 10".
- Black 1 1/2" Simplicity®/MD Buckles: One Quick Release Buckle and Two Bar Slide Buckles.
- Plastic screw on Jar Lid measuring 1 1/4" in diameter and 3/8" deep.
- 1/8" thick Craft Foam: One sheet White; One sheet Dark Gray.
- One sheet of 1/4" thick Black Craft Foam.
- Approximately 24" of Black 24 gauge Wire
- White LED Bulbs, Switches and Batteries for Chest and Belt Controls.
- Approximately 24" of Black 3/4" wide Hook and Loop Tape; Hook side is sticky back; Loop side is sew-in.
- Epoxy
- Mold Release, preferably water soluble.
- Heat Gun

Referring to the dimensions listed in the materials list, cut and sand the three balsa wood Control Box molds. Using a template for each of the four button sizes, cut out the four molds using 1/8" thick balsa wood. Sand each of these button molds slightly narrower and shorter than the templates to allow for the thickness of the TranspArt. Keep the molds 1/8" thick, however.

STEP 3 – MOLDING WORBLA'S® TranspArt

NOTE: Carefully plan the layout of the larger pieces. These pieces will only just fit on the TranspArt sheet with excess along one side for the buttons.

There will be excess TranspArt, after molding, that will be cut away. This can be reheated and reused for another project, however, if the pieces are kneaded together, they will lose their transparency and appear frosted.

Cut the TranspArt sheet into the following pieces:

Chest Control Box: 7½" wide x 7½" long

Control Knob Box: 5½" wide x 6½" long

Two Belt Control Boxes: Each 6½" wide x 7½" long

For the Chest Control, you need small pieces for: Four large rectangular Buttons; two square Buttons; three thin rectangular Buttons.

For the two Belt Controls, you need small pieces for four rectangular Buttons.

CAUTION: Worbla's® TranspArt must be heated to 250 degrees Fahrenheit. Work on a heat resistant surface and protect your hands with smooth work gloves.

Apply mold release to the top and sides of all the molds and reapply before each use. Center the TranspArt piece over its appropriate mold and heat using heat gun, working on one side at a time. Watch the area of thermoplastic you are heating. You will notice a slight drooping as it starts to soften. Do not over-heat! Press and shape the piece using a damp wooden craft stick. Heat and reheat the piece as you work all around the mold working out all folds and wrinkles.

TIP: Have a small bowl of water handy to soak your wooden craft stick. The hot TranspArt won't stick to a damp sculpting tool.

Because the Belt Control Boxes are deeper, you may find it necessary to seam the TranspArt at the corners to achieve the desired smoothness without stretching it too thin. You will be trimming away the excess instead of trying to ease it in. The TranspArt will stick to itself if heated enough. Smooth the seam with the damp craft stick.

For all the buttons, make sure you have a small lip of TranspArt all around the molded piece. Try to make the lip as smooth as possible and at a sharp right angle to the button. This lip is needed to glue the button to the inside of the Control Box.

Let the TranspArt cool before attempting to remove the mold. This will help the piece retain its molded shape and keep it from sticking to the mold.

STEP 4 – CUTTING OUT CONTROL BOXES

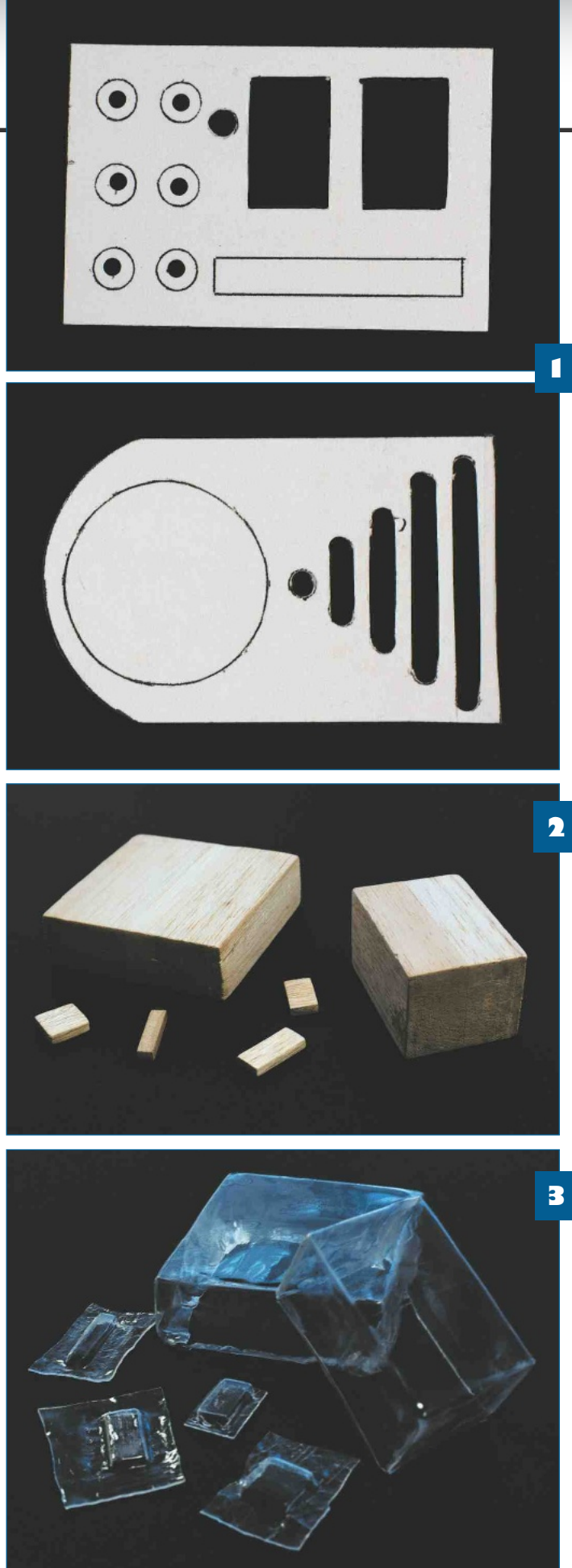
Clean off all of the mold release. Trim the raw edges of the Control Boxes. The finished depths are as follows:

Chest Control Box: 1" deep

Control Knob Box: 1" deep

Two Belt Control Boxes: Each 1½" deep

Cover the top of the molds for the Chest Control and Belt



Control Boxes with a piece of white craft foam to protect their surfaces. Place the trimmed Control Boxes over the molds again. Tape the templates on top of the Boxes and trace the areas to be cut away for the rectangular buttons. Also, mark the LED and knob placements on the Belt Control Boxes. Remove the templates and using a utility knife and metal edged ruler, cut out all the buttons. Remember, do not cut out the silver frames on the Chest Control Box or the silver rectangles on the Belt Control Boxes.

Remove the Control Boxes from the molds and make sure the buttons will fit into the openings. Trim part of the lip on the buttons so they do not overlap. The buttons should stand out 1/8" above the surface of the Control Box.

Punch holes for the knobs and LEDs in the Belt Control Boxes using a clean hot glue gun or soldering iron. The holes should be only big enough to fit the screw end of the thumb screws and the LED bulb.

STEP 5 – PAINTING

NOTE: All painting is done on the inside of the molded pieces.

Paint all the Control Boxes using black enamel. Follow the color illustration for the proper painting of the buttons using silver enamel and red or green stained glass paint. Additional coats of paint may be needed to prevent LED light leakage. Paint two LED bulbs using red glass paint.

TIP: Consult your specific product information guides concerning drying and possible curing time.

STEP 6 – FOAM PIECES

Using a dry iron, at a low heat, press the 1/8" gray foam between two layers of brown paper. Glue a piece of manila folder to the back of a piece of foam large enough for the two rectangular pieces for the Belt Control Boxes.

Trace and cut out the Control Knob piece with the slots, the three frames and the backed rectangular pieces. Paint the jar lid and foam pieces using the metallic silver spray paint with a clear gloss final coat.

Using the 24 gauge black wire, wrap the backed rectangular pieces in a crisscross pattern.

STEP 7 – ASSEMBLY

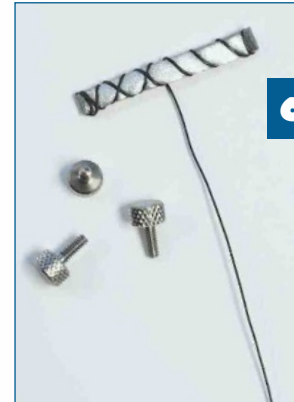
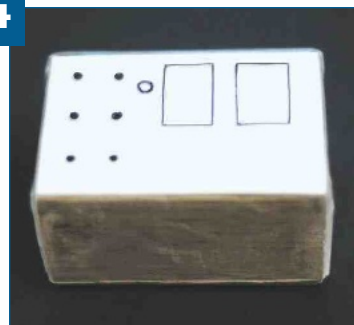
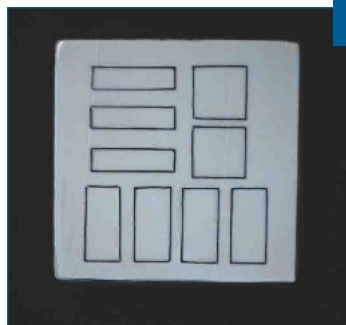
Position the buttons on the inside of the Chest Control and Belt Control Boxes following the color illustration. Epoxy buttons in place, gluing all around the outer edge of each button. Test for light seepage and touch up paint as needed. Epoxy thumb screws and silver piece with wire, in place, on the Belt Control Boxes. Glue silver foam frames around red buttons on the Chest Control Box. Epoxy the slotted silver piece and jar lid to the Control Knob Box.

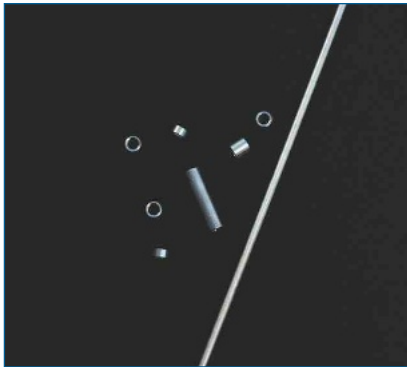
STEP 8 – LEDs

NOTE: If you are inexperienced wiring an LED circuit, there are excellent tutorials online to introduce you to the process. Have someone with experience assist you with the wiring.

TIP: As the Control Boxes are small and light, try to use small batteries and switches.

Assemble the LED lights, batteries and switches for the Chest Control Box and the two Belt Control Boxes. All the LEDs used are white except for the one red LED for each Belt Control Box. Insert one red LED through the hole in each Belt Control Box and glue in place. Position other LEDs behind the red and green buttons on all Control Boxes. You may need to mount your LEDs to 1/4" black craft foam to keep them in place inside the Boxes.





For the back of each of the four Control Boxes, cut a piece of black $\frac{1}{4}$ " craft foam to fit snugly. For the Boxes with LEDs in them, establish where access will be needed to reach the switches and batteries. Cut out that "trap door". Glue the rest of the foam piece in place on the back of the Box. Glue a small ribbon pull tab to the inside of the trap door, extending out. Just fit the trap door in place—do not glue.

STEP 9 – METAL RODS

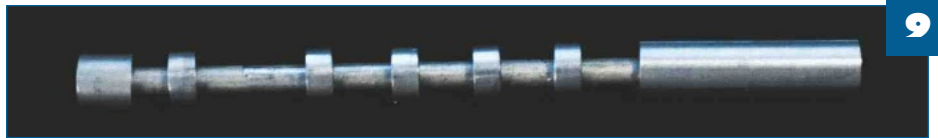
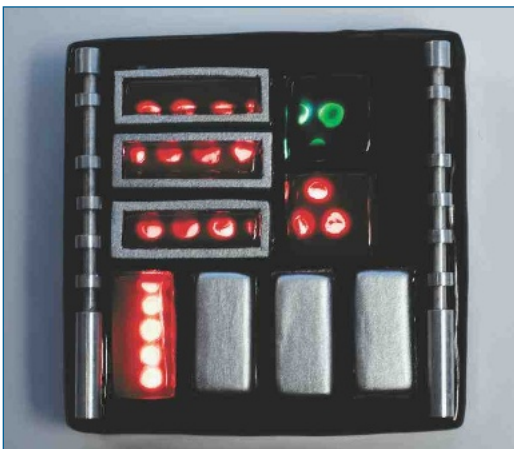
On each $\frac{1}{8}$ " Aluminum Rod, thread on the following spacers in order: One 1", five $\frac{1}{8}$ " and topping with one $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Epoxy the end spacers flush with the end of the rods. Glue the remaining spacers $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart except for a $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap and then a $\frac{1}{8}$ " gap at the top. Glue finished rods to each side of the Chest Control Box, as shown in the illustration.

STEP 10 – BELT

Finish the ends of the belting by quickly passing the edges through a candle flame to just melt the fine fibers. Thread each end of belting through a Bar Slide Buckle and then an end of the Quick Release Buckle. Adjust to fit.

STEP 11 – HOOK AND LOOP TAPE

Apply sticky-backed hook tape to the back of the Control Boxes. Decide on proper placement of Control Boxes and stitch loop tape to costume and belt.



COMPLETED





MORPH BEGINNER HOW-TO STAR WARS MASK EDITION! ITHORIAN (HAMMERHEAD) AT THE CANTINA!

MASK BY SPAT OKTAN OF SPATCAVE STUDIOS

During the glory days of *Star Wars* fan films, we were working on *Star Wars: Revelations* and the director needed a bunch of alien creatures for a senate scene. We already had a pretty sizeable collections of creatures; many were modified store-bought masks (repainted with new details added), and some were ones that we had sculpted, molded, and cast ourselves. But we had already used most of them numerous times throughout the film and wanted to showcase something new. We didn't have the time to sculpt, mold, and cast something new, but we still wanted something interesting that hadn't been seen before. My sculptor at the time, Eric Negron, came up with an idea of making it out of wire and foam (keep in mind that this was about 10 years before the foam mat costume craze), so we decided to give it a shot!

In one day we had an awesome mask. We both always loved the Ithorian from the cantina scene in *Star Wars* (1977), but had never seen anyone make a fan-made mask of it. So that's what we set out to do! Sadly those pics we took back then were very low-res, so we set up and built a fresh one just for *Cosplay Culture* magazine!

This is a great project for first-time mask-makers. It's a simple project that can be done in a weekend (or even one day), and doesn't require a ton of materials or skills. If you can use tape and scissors, this is the project for you!

**Most of the materials we're using are pretty safe, but this is not recommended for children without adult supervision. Liquid latex has a strong ammonia smell and some people are allergic to it. Work in a well-ventilated area, and wear clothes that you don't care about getting destroyed. If you are allergic to latex, wear gloves while working, and be extra careful.*

1. The underframe of this mask is going to be that armature wire. Tape it down to the helmet to get a secure attachment point (you don't want it to pop off!), and just bend the wire to the basic shape of the head. If it feels a little too floppy, tape a second set of wire to the first and that should reinforce it more. I also ran a line of wire around the bottom of the



Materials

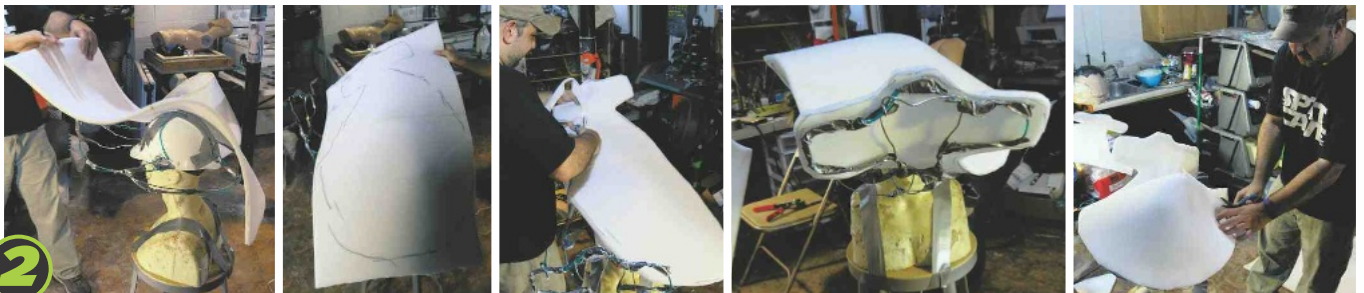
- A hard hat to mount the sculpture on (you can make your own sculpting form from a mannequin head or bundled-up newspapers wrapped in tape)
- Armature wire (10-12 gauge) or multi-purpose wire
- Roll of duct tape
- Hot glue gun and extra glue
- 1" chip brushes
- String
- Clear Christmas ornament shells (for the eyes)
- Acrylic paints in varying colors
- Two yards of 1/2" foam padding
- Liquid latex (Castin' Craft Mold Builder)
- Three to four pairs of large panty hose
- Scissors
- A marker
- Some plastic cups for mixing materials in

1



mask to cover the head of the wearer. I'll cut some slots in there later so the wearer's head can be hidden from view with he/she being able to see (a little).

2. Now we add the meat of the mask. Lay the sheet of foam over the wire and mark the shape with a permanent marker. Cut out the shape and hot glue the foam down to the wire. Don't worry, it doesn't have to be perfect! At some point you'll have to cut a dart out of the top layer of foam. This will help the foam take a rounded "bump" shape. Cut a triangle-shaped wedge out of the side and then pull the foam to close the gap. Tape it closed and you'll have a soft pyramid or hill-shaped hump, which will be the top of the head.





Once the top layer is done, line up and mark the foam for the front and cut that out. You can glue it in place, or just use the duct tape to tape the edges together. When you tape the edges together, bend them in slightly so the edges are rounded and not squared off. This will look more natural.

For the rest of the bottom part of the head, you can cut the sheets of foam in smaller pieces and tape them in place to the wireframe and then connect them to the top set of foam.

Don't forget to cut some slits so you can actually see while wearing this!

Now we can go in and cut small bits of foam and tape them down to add some raised areas and other details to the mask so it's not completely smooth. I also tape in a second line of foam on each side for the Hammerhead's gills or mouths or whatever those side things are!

I also like to tape down some string in a few areas to give the sense of veins.

3. Now, we can just go over the foam with liquid latex and then paint it, but the latex would soak into the foam so it would take three to four layers before we had something that could hold paint. So to create a "skin" that we can brush the latex onto, we'll use pantyhose. I know it sounds strange, but trust me. This makes a great base for the latex to bond to, and it adds a subtle skin texture to the mask.

Cut the legs off the pantyhose first, and slowly stretch the hose over the front of the face, and the other over the back pulling it forwards. If there's a gap, cut another piece of hose to cover the gap. Don't worry if it's not stretched as far as the other parts. Just tack it down with a small bit of tape and we can patch it later.

You'll also see wrinkles and other irregularities in the pantyhose as you go. Leave them! Those will add life to your mask and make it look more like real skin.





4. Break out the chip brush and brush the latex on! There's no right or wrong way to do it. You may get some brush strokes in the final piece, so try and keep your strokes all going in the same direction, or go over the mask and stipple a layer of latex on top of it by tapping the tip of the brush onto the mask to break up the brush strokes.

As you're going, if you come across a piece of duct tape that's not covered with hose, cut a small square of pantyhose and latex it in place and then cover it with more latex to blend it in.

Once you have a base coat done, it's time to add in the eyes! Cut a slit in the pantyhose and foam and slip the plastic hemisphere inside. I then took a scrap of pantyhose and cut a slot in the center of it and latex'd it in place as eyelids. Don't worry about getting latex on the eyes! Latex will peel off really easily once we're done and we will paint the eyes then.

Now we let it dry! You'll know the latex is dry when it turns almost clear, and is no longer tacky to the touch.

5. Now we mix the acrylic paints! I use acrylics because they're latex-based, so they'll stick well to the latex skin. You can use other paints, but I don't recommend it. Enamel paints won't flex with the mask and will crack and peel off.

I went with a dark brown, but I'm sure these guys come in many different colors, so paint it the way you want!

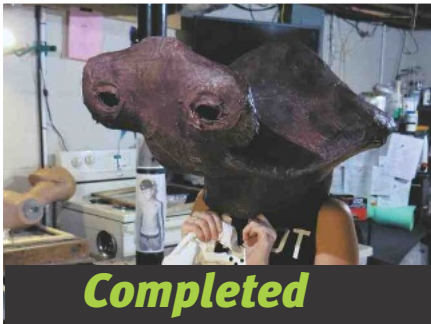
After covering the whole head with the dark brown, I went in with a pink color and painted in the gills/mouths on the side.

Then I mixed the pink and brown to get a lighter brown that I drybrushed around the head to add highlights. To drybrush, get a little paint on the brush and then rub off almost all of the paint onto a paper towel. What you have left is just a tiny bit of paint that will stick to the higher parts of the mask and add some subtle differences in the colors.

Next I mixed the brown with a little black, and painted it into the deep recesses to add depth.

Then I went in with some speckling paint. Get some paint that's been mixed with a little water so it's runnier than the regular paint you've been using. Put some on your brush and pull a finger through the bristles almost flicking the paint onto the mask.





This will add small dots of paint that will also act to break up the skin texture and make it look more “real” rather than it being all one single color. I did this with both the light brown and dark brown paints.

Now it's time to peel the latex off the eyes! Now we can paint the eyes themselves. I used black. Some people might do them red, or a dark red. That's all your choice!

Once the paint dries (which shouldn't be too long if you have a fan on), your mask is ready to try on!

You could clear-coat it, but I like the skin-like sheen that it has from the dried acrylic.

As I said before, this is a super basic, one-day build. Please use this as a jumping-off point and add your own flair to it! Use an airbrush to paint in details, add servos to make the eyes blink, texture it with a sponge dipped in latex to get a different skin pattern to it. Do whatever you want! It's your mask! Wrap it in a robe and you're all set to take your seat at the cantina in Mos Eisley!

Visit spatcave.com or head over to the SpatCave Studios Facebook page at [facebook.com/SpatCaveStudios](https://www.facebook.com/SpatCaveStudios)



CALLING ALL PADAWAN!

*Tom Rehn's
Civilized Galactic Gear has
the accessories you need
to become a Jedi*

INTERVIEW BY
MIKE BEDNARSKY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JAMES GROSS OF JGSTUDIOS

So you love your lightsaber and you're diligent about practicing your form when using it, but how will you pay your respects to the Jedi Order without the proper tools to protect your saber—such as a pouch and belt?

The hand-made products from Civilized Galactic Gear will solve this problem for you. *Cosplay Culture* flew out to Mos Eisley to get the dirt from company founder Tom Rehn in the confines of the dim but delightful Chalmun's Spaceport Cantina. We were offered products that are so good that we almost don't want to share them with you! But we are Jedi after all. Read on to get the tips.

Cosplay Culture: Share the basics on what it takes to create your products.

Tom Rehn: Everything is made by hand, and almost all of it is from leather. Depending on the pouch style and size, they have from 18-27 separate parts. Each takes at least eight days to make. Most of that is drying time.

Nothing I dye is just one color. It's many layers of colors, some are five to six deep depending on what Jedi brown is requested. There are four main Jedi browns.

What should Star Wars fans know about your belts?

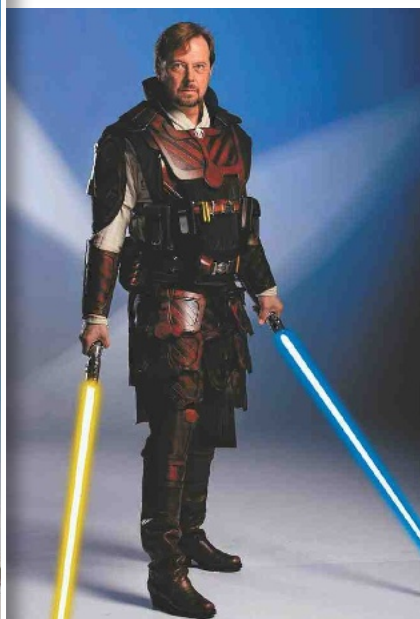
Each is cut to the customer's size and/or special requests, so all are custom. My Fluted Pouches are all hand-formed, hand-tooled leather. I research and research for the right type of buckles that are actually functional, then I design the designs on the belts to match and compliment the buckles. Each belt is custom-made for the person who ordered it.

You also offer bracer and armor pieces, such as the Jedi armor set from the Old Republic era. How do you prepare an armor product?

I start with an idea, a drawing pad, and sketch them. If I like the design, and it looks plausible, I dissect the sketches into a working 3D pattern in my draw-



Model: Esther Swanson * Makeup: Anna Sawyer * Asst. to Photographer: Bruce Eyton



ing pad. I transfer the dissected patterns onto brown shipping paper and then move the paper patterns over onto veg-tanned leather. I then start cutting the leather, and hope I was right with the idea I thought would work when I started the 3D wrapping and warping of the shapes.

Civilized Galactic Gear accessories are built to last a long time, because of your work ethic and passion for creating them.

Almost everything I make is made with a "Will this be functional in the real world?" point of view. The real world being the real world we cosplay *and* pay taxes in. I developed this attitude after spending more than 35 years at renaissance festivals, starting as an actor and ending my reign as an entertainment director. I spent three plus decades trying to recreate authenticity with an attention to detail.

Is authenticity in this case directly correlated with what is seen in the Star Wars films?

I make everything as movie accurate as possible, (unless I can make it better than movie accurate) and practical for everyday use. This usually is a good thing, but when I started, this was not without its denouncements by some ultra purists of the Star Wars universe. However, when it was pointed out I did the impossible: fluted leather pouches, something that even George with all of his money could not do. Let's say, I have been accepted.

And that's how Civilized Galactic Gear began, because creating usable Jedi pouches was such a daunting task?

What I vaguely remember [at a con one year], we were on a balcony overlooking an atrium. A Jedi [and his friends] walk below us with unpainted plastic pouches on his belt. I comment on how horrible the plastic pouches look. It was countered with [a comment on how the pouches were plastic in Episodes I-III]. One of them says, "They were plastic-painted to look like leather because it is impossible to make them out of leather." My mind was going. It took me about four days, but I was sure I had figured it out how to do it, and it was not going to be easy. I get back home, and

inform my wife that I am going to make "Fluted Jedi Pouches" out of leather, because people think that it is impossible.

Will you be creating any products mirroring the pieces in the new trilogy?

I will most definitely be trying to, that is if there is anything I can emulate or think I can. I am salivating for the new Luke costume. He will be nice. I got to see Kylo Ren's belt at Star Wars Celebration right in front of me, and I studied that. That belt will fit proper.

You were in ninth grade when the first Star Wars film came out, and you've been a fan from the beginning.

To this day, I remember what part of the theater I was in. What my view was like. Star Wars was the first movie I ever wanted to stay through the credits.


J.J. Abrams directed the new movie. Will you walk out of the theater saying he did it right?

When you see fellow actors and directors being interviewed about what they saw behind the scenes and on the sets, and while they describe what it is that they saw they start crying because what they saw was so wonderful? C'mon. The opening weekend box office receipts of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* will be the largest in movie history, and will not be broken for a long, long time.

Who is your favorite character to cosplay?

Tony Stark. Yeah, I know it's not Star Wars, but until I see what Luke Skywalker looks like after 30 years in [The Force Awakens], I love playing Stark. Or any Simon Pegg character.

What has Star Wars fandom done for the culture of cosplay?

Absolutely everything! It has brought to the forefront of our psyche, on every single continent, every single nation, to people of all walks of life, that to dream of something better is a good thing. Fantasy can inspire, encourage, and enlighten us to be better than we are. 

civilizedgalacticgear.com



MARVEL

AARON
CASSADAY
MARTIN

001

VARIANT
EDITIONSTAR
WARS

MARVEL

AARON
CASSADAY
MARTIN

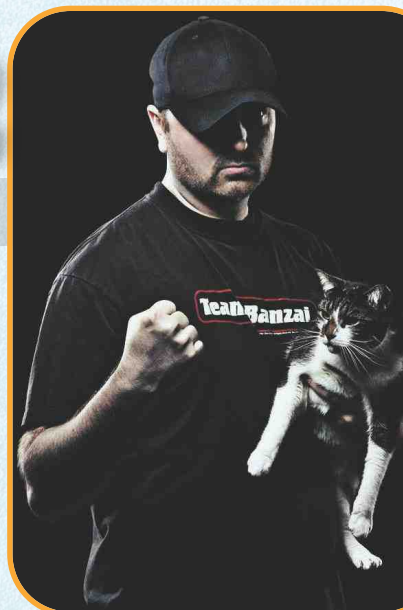
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VARIANT
EDITIONSTAR
WARSJEDI OF THE
ART WORLD
SCOTT BLAIR*His colored pencil is his lightsaber*

ARTICLE BY ALAN SCHOLTING

Scott Blair has become synonymous with comic cons around the country. Appearing on everything from art books to airplanes, you've more than likely seen his work several times—possibly without even knowing it.

A Florida native, Blair has worked on promotional materials for several conventions, events, and even UFC stars including Chuck Liddell and Randy Couture. In 2007 however, Scott shot a Bettie Page-themed photo shoot and instantly fell in love with the modern pin-up medium. It wasn't until 2009 that Scott and his all-star lineup of models ventured out into the convention circuit, enlisting the help of superstar cosplayers like Ivy Doomkitty and Yaya Han as well as mainstream WWE and TNA wrestlers like Lisa Marie Varon, Velvet Sky, and a slew of others. His clean and polished style along with his active imagination has made him one of the busiest sketch cover artists in the entire sea of



MARVEL

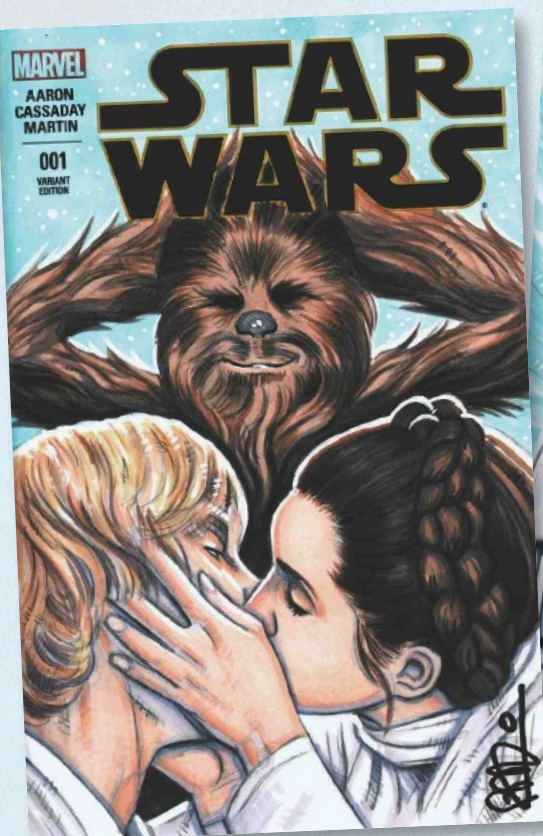
**AARON
CASSADAY
MARTIN**

001

**VARIANT
EDITION**

STAR WARS





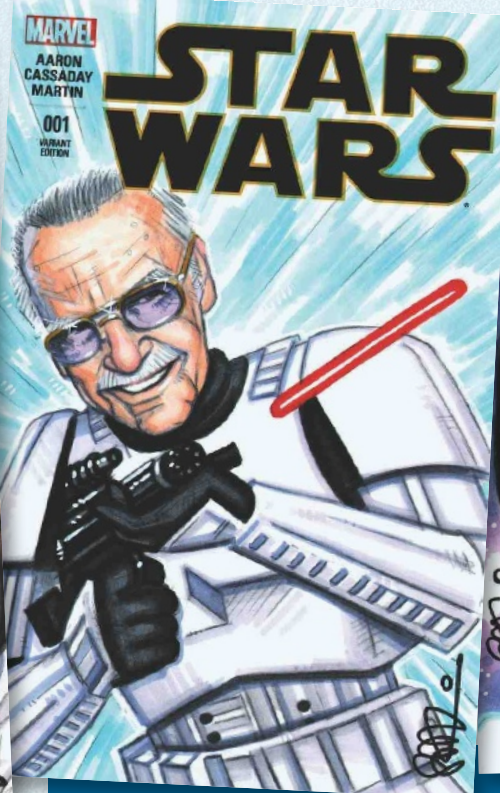
Cosplay Culture: Let's start with the big name cosplayers you've used as models.

Scott Blair: I've been inspired to draw Ivy Doomkitty several times. She cosplays some of my favorite characters. The latest artwork I did with her was a cover for her photo book *The Many Faces of Doom*. It was a fun steampunk selfie idea that also included her cat Gandalf.

And then there's Yaya Han.

Yaya Han was also one of the first cosplayers I drew. She always looks amazing and goes the extra mile with her work. The details on her Wonder Woman armor blew me away.

Who else? Keep going down the list.



"I absolutely love working with Scott, both at his booth and as a model. He is a really fun person to be around and his art is fantastic. I have been a fan of Scott's art since before I had started working with him, so I was super flattered when he asked me to help out at MegaCon 2013 and drew me for the first time. Since then, we've become great friends and have attended tons of conventions together across the U.S." – Uncanny Megan

Uncanny Megan has been on a lot of my covers. She makes me laugh and I always come up with silly ideas. She cosplays a lot of X-Men and Dragon Ball characters, two of my favorite things. Jessica LG's Rogue and WWII Wonder Woman cosplays were so good, I just had to draw them. I also recently worked with Cle Shay Cosplay. She's been my *Spider-Gwen*, but her *Hawkgirl* cosplay at San Diego Comic-Con was super cool. There are so many cosplayers that give me new ideas every day, I wish I had time to draw them all.

Why did you start drawing cosplayers?

I started off drawing pinup artworks from live models. I would take pictures of them posing just like Gil Elvgren and some of the other old school pin-up artists. Trying to capture a likeness, but also keeping it a little cartoonish has always been my goal. When these sketch variants came along, it just seemed perfect to draw cosplayers as the characters on the comics.

But you've also worked with personalities outside of the cosplay world.

Yes, my very first photo shoot for pin-ups was a Bettie Page theme with the wrestler Daffney. I also got to work with Velvet Sky, Christy Hemme and Shelly Martinez, all wrestlers who gave me their time and helped me get started with my first pin-up book, *Hard Candy*. Drawing those ladies really helped me develop my figures and poses, I could-



n't have done it without them.

Now being around great cosplayers a lot of the time, have you ever dressed up and cosplayed at a convention?

No, not yet! It looks like fun though. Maybe one day.

How long have you been interested in art?

As long as I can remember. My family business, Captain Bijou, dealt in old comic books, vintage movie posters and memorabilia. I got to see amazing pulp magazine covers, Golden Age comics. Just really incredible illustrations from the '30s and '40s. At the same

time, growing up in the '80s, the packaging art for toys like G.I. Joe and He-Man were a big inspiration. It felt like I was always surrounded by art, always reading comics, and playing video games. Then the wave of '90s Japanese animation really took my imagination to another level. I was hooked.

So is it safe to say that you are doing what you always hoped you would be doing? Or did you have other aspirations?

I played baseball as far as it took me, but when that was over I put all

"I was a fan of Scott's work the second I found his Instagram. I absolutely loved his modern pin-up style and his coloring technique. He was the first artist I've ever commissioned work from and the piece is one of the most cherished things I own. We've been friends ever since. I also love when he draws other cosplayers. His ability to capture people's faces and physical features is outstanding. He's so talented." – Jessica LG

of my effort into drawing. I always wanted to be an illustrator, but I was worried my skill level just wasn't far enough along. It took me years to get good enough to pay the bills, and I've still got a long way to go. I am very thankful I've been able to get this far and create art for a living.

Your Star Wars #1 came out earlier in 2015.

I was so amped. I had years of ideas pent up in my head for Star Wars sketches, I think I drew 25 in the first two months. I had some really fun ideas for *The Walking Dead* blank. The great thing about blank variant sketch covers is there is such a variety, every time a new one comes out I'm flooded with ideas.

Now, be honest, when you saw the *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens* trailer for the first time, did you cry?

Totally! Only at the end when I heard Han's voice. The rest of the trailer I just had my mouth and eyes wide open. Speechless. Trust me, when I'm sitting in the theater and I see that Lucasfilm logo, I'll be crying like a crazy person.

What's your favorite line out of all the Star Wars movies?

"He's no good to me dead." Boba Fett was always the coolest to me, that design was just badass. All those weapons? Come on.

Who shot first?

Han forever! I grew up thinking Han Solo was a scoundrel, did some shady things in the past but then came around and redeemed himself by helping the Rebellion. And he fell in love with Princess Leia, that's the best! But in the beginning you





"Scott surprised me with the first two covers of me and I instantly fell in love with his art style. He has a knack for capturing someone's likeness while adding his own flair to the piece. I liked his art so much, I commissioned him to do the cover of my photo book with me in steampunk garb and my cat, Gandalf, as Sherlock Holmes. Scott is a truly talented artist and friend."

– Ivy Doomkitty

Who are some artists that you draw your inspiration from?

There are so many, and they range from all kinds of artwork. Reynold Brown and Drew Struzan are two of my favorite movie poster artists. Noriyoshi Ohrai

didn't know if you could trust him or not, if he was a good guy or a bad guy.

Other than sketch covers, where else might people find some of your work?

I was big into pin-ups before the sketch covers came along. They were used on all kinds of stuff: T-shirts, stickers, tin signs. I've also drawn original sketch cards for different properties, including Mars Attacks, The Walking Dead, Star Wars, and The Hobbit to name a few. I love the idea that someone can buy a pack of trading cards, and pull one of my sketches.

and Tsuneo Sanda have created some mind-blowing movie poster art. I love the pin-ups of Dave Stevens and Adam Hughes. I'm blown away by the dinosaurs of William Stout's *The Dinosaurs: A Fantastic New View of a Lost Era* and Arthur Adams' monsters. One of the great things about traveling and going to comic conventions is meeting new artists and seeing new work. There are so many incredibly talented artists working today that inspire me daily, and who I've also been lucky enough to make friends with.

Anyone that follows you on social media knows you frequently use your pet cat in your artwork.

Creedence the cat! She's great! I rescued her from a shelter about 5 years

ago. She was the last kitten in the room. She ran over to me and was like, "Get me out of here!" If only I could bring her with me to conventions. That would be awesome.

How many conventions would you say you do in a year, and what are some of your favorites?

This year was about 10 conventions. They are all lots of fun. Being immersed in comics, artwork, cosplay, and toys for a weekend is my idea of heaven. New York Comic Con was incredible and WonderCon makes me want to move to the West Coast. I have a soft spot in my heart for Dragon Con too since I used to drive to Atlanta back in the '90s and geek out. 

ScottBlairArt.com

Instagram: scottblairart



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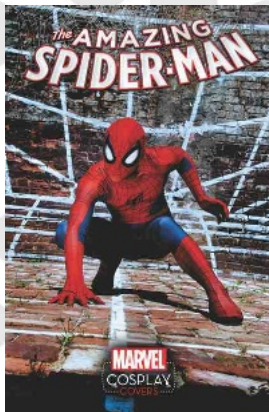
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Gig^{ant}tic Talent **ANTTI KARPPINEN**

His cinematic photos look like movie posters—
and cosplayers are lining up to get that starring role



Chances are you've imagined yourself as the hero of your favorite movie, or seen yourself as the protagonist on that movie's poster. There are thousands of would-be Luke Skywalkers out there, wishing they were the ones reaching their lightsaber to the sky to create that Dark Side-defying beam on the original 1977 ad. Photographer and digital artist Antti Karppinen makes those dreams come for his clients—in a way. For the betterment of those modeling for the lens, and later for the curious photo viewers, Karppinen, who has a background in advertising imagery, focuses on what he calls the "visual experience" of his work. *Cosplay Culture* crossed paths with the Finland native to learn about his style and why cosplayers are buzzing about it.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTTI KARPPINEN, ALIAS CREATIVE ♦ ARTICLE BY MIKE BEDNARSKY



Cosplay Culture: Before you became a pro photographer, you were involved in graphic design.

Antti Karppinen: I slowly turned that profession into full-time photography. I have always liked telling stories with my images and now I have combined my creative past with my photography allowing myself to create something special.

On your website you state that your mission as a photographer, and ultimately as an artist, is “to build the visual experience, which tells the story of your company in a globally understandable way.”

My cases are mostly commercial photo shoots to different clients. I try to create concepts and images that are original and creative. I'm not only doing images but the whole concept and strategy behind the images which companies or individuals are going to use to promote their services or products.





A lot of your photography is otherworldly and surreal, with the use of vast landscapes or striking colors. I'm a huge fan of movie posters and the whole film industry, so I try to push my images to have a distinct look and "movie feel" in them.

So that means you're suited for cosplay shoots with strong fantastical elements.

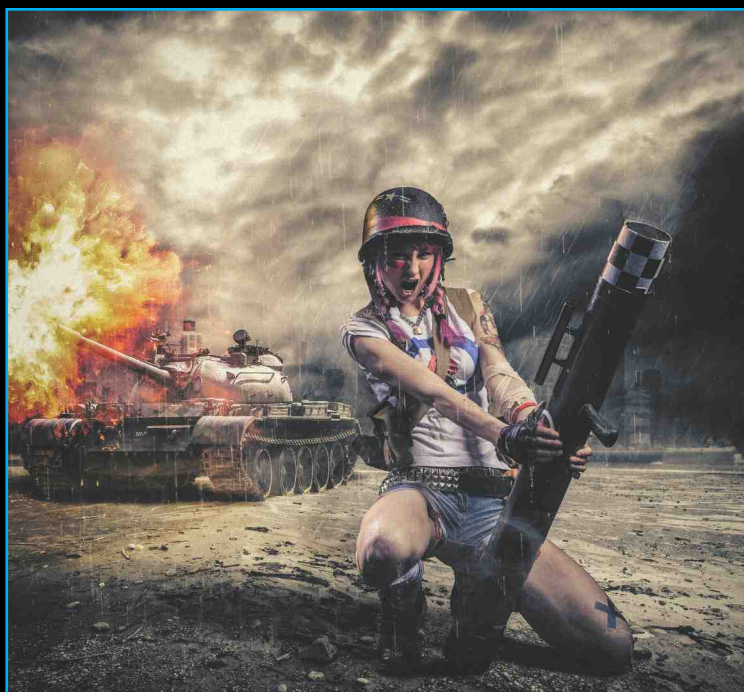
Cosplayers fit this style well, because as soon as I have the best possible pose from them, I can go on and create whatever imaginable, making them look like actual characters in movie posters. This is one way of making fantasies real! Shooting cosplay is very fun and I'm drawn to all the visual details of the costumes that people have created. For me, shooting a Jack Sparrow cosplay artist is like I am shooting the actual actor Johnny Depp.

And how did you develop that style? As a self-proclaimed image artisan, do you aim to push the envelope of photography as an artform?

I definitely experiment a lot with my retouching. People say that my images look like they are painted. That is very much so, because I overpaint all the images by hand with light and shadow, creating that certain kind of look. Finding the right style and technique takes a lot of time and experimenting, but it is worth it in the end when all the pieces come together.

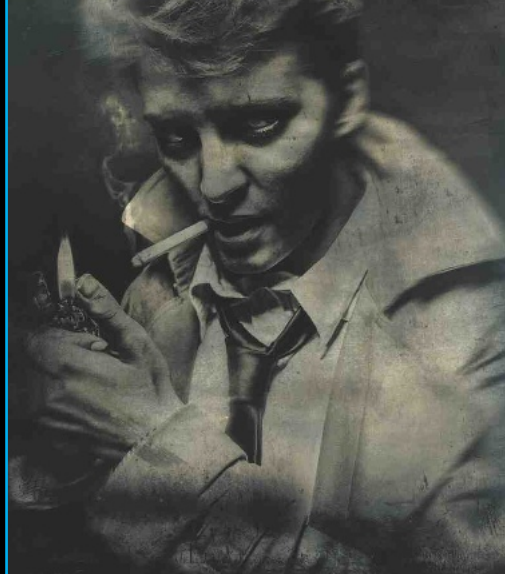
How were you introduced to cosplay?

One of my friends introduced me to cosplay by recommending me to go to a comic con event held in Cardiff, Wales. I was hooked the first minute I started to see all the cosplay artists and their creations. For a visual artist like me, it was like I was walking in a candy store.







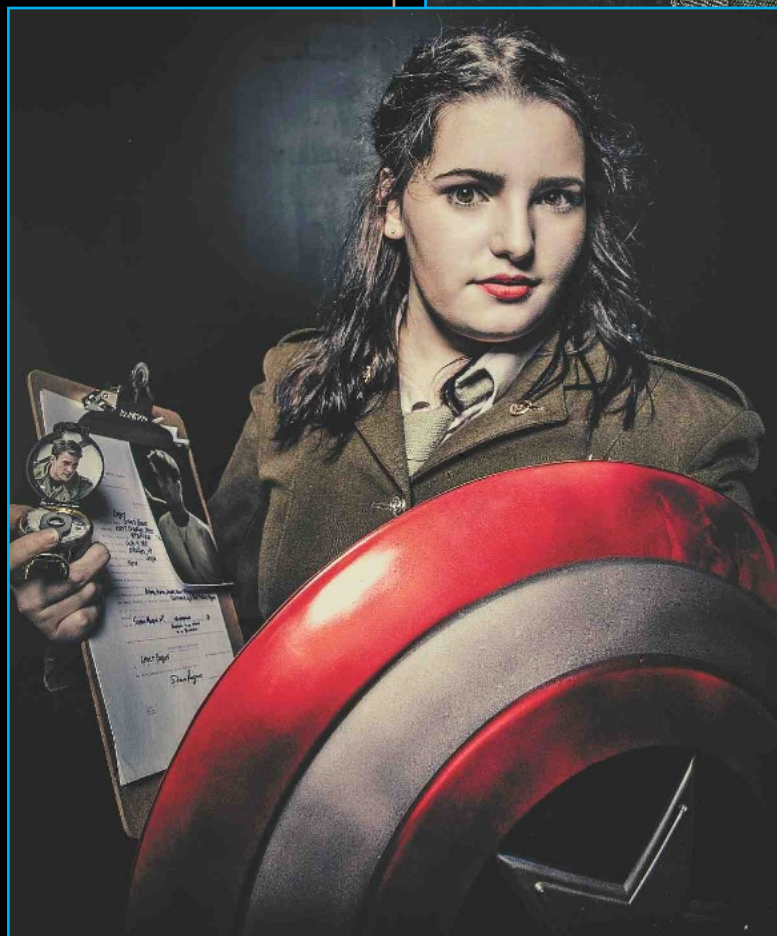


Any *Star Wars* shoots? Those cosplays are everywhere right now, for an obvious reason.

I think one of the most memorable characters was at a London comic con where I took a really sinister portrait of a Sith Lord. That guy was in character [the whole time].

You snapped a lot of comic convention photos in Cardiff, and some of those shots went viral.

I decided to bring a bit more light into play and created simple and straightforward portraits, but the trick was to



bring the pictures alive with my retouching style.

A section of your website is dedicated to your blog, where your fans can learn about your work in an intimate space.

With my blog I want to show people what I'm currently working on and also show how my retouching works. I try to write interesting articles about the photography/digital art industry and inspire others. I'm always trying to apply the "sharing is caring" mentality into everything I do. It is really nice to be able to show people how certain pictures are created. 

**anttikarppinen.com
500px.com/qstone**

Chicago's **C2E2** 2015 PART II

Cosplayers from all around the world surfaced in Cook County to make some Illinois

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE PRUE



The term "spring cleaning" is a reminder, for cosplayers anyway, to spray and scrub one's outfit for that event-ready shine. The Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo, or C2E2, which fell on a beautifully breezy weekend in late April, caused that maintenance to be all the more crucial. McCormick Place, on South Lake Shore Drive, buzzed with the costumed faithful dressed as characters such as Captain America and Casey from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles franchise. Every pop culture universe from comic books to video games was well-represented, and cosplay star cameos from the likes of Ivy Doomkitty and Vivid Vivka contributed to the gravitas of the event, skyrocketing it to top-tier comic con status.

C2E2's Charity Art Auction was a huge success, with over 60 artists donating original works to benefit the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Panel goodies included the hour-long Mega Cosplay Q&A, shedding light on the oft-overlooked (in comparison to San Diego and New York) Midwest cosplay scene. Paul Feig, of *Freaks and Geeks* and *The Office* fame, unveiled his new Yahoo TV show *Other Space*. Feig addressed the series, which debuted a week prior to the convention, with a Q&A. Also in the Windy City were M. Night Shyamalan and Matt Dillon to promote the 10-episode FOX series *Wayward Pines*.

C2E2 was not, and is not, something to be missed. Be determined to attend the 2016 event, and head over to c2e2.com for the details. 🇨🇦











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NOTHIN' BUT COSPLAY IN THE NUTMEG STATE

July jamboree of creatures and the caped

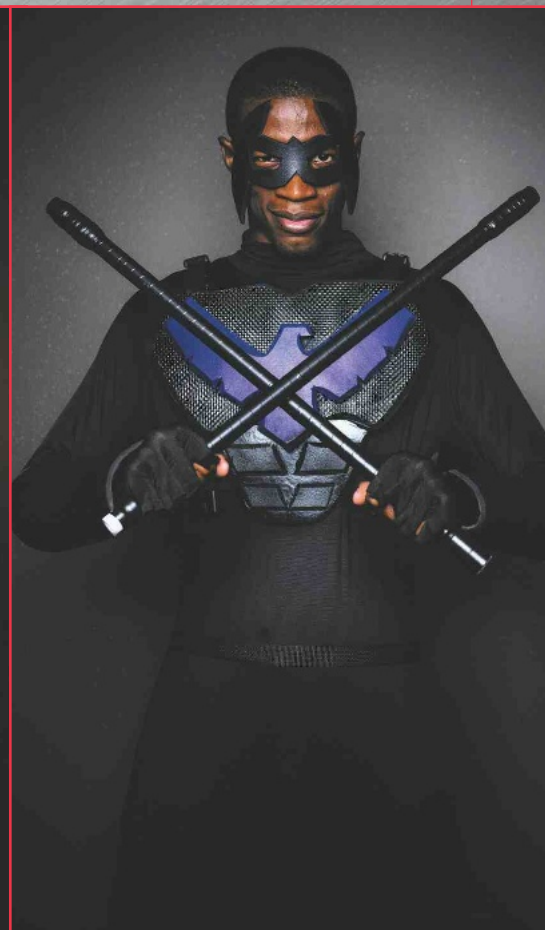
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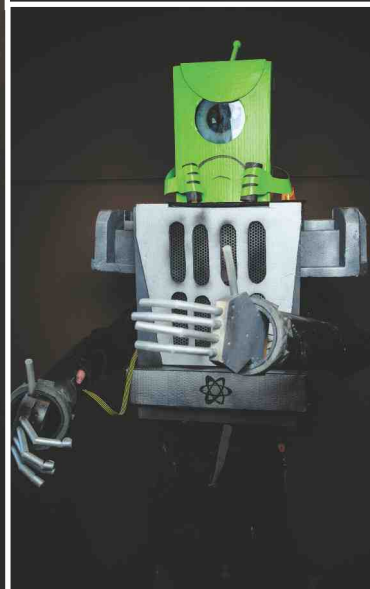


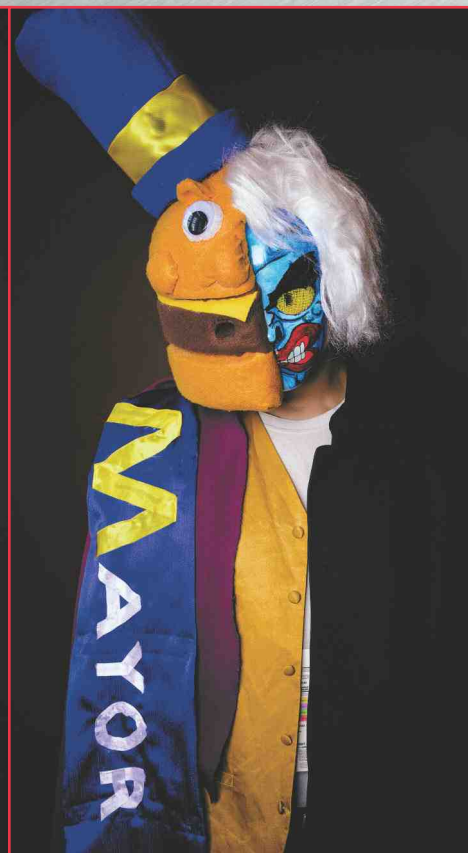
Beyond the gateway to New York City that is Connecticut's Fairfield County, and below the Massachusetts border where New England really begins, is Hartford, CT's capital city. ConnectiCon, a prime cosplay event, is held in the city's Connecticut Convention Center. With a turnout of over 11,000 attendees, ConnectiCon 2015 catered to fans of every pop culture shade by way of guests and products. The comprehensive list included illustrator Vitaly S Alexius, T Campbell of *Guilty Age* fame, *Buffy*'s Amber Benson, Karan Ashley from the *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, webcomic creators such as Jamie Noguchi and Rosscott Nover, plus many more. Wacky subsets within the event included a giant Cards of Humanity game, medieval sword-fighting, and a belly dance show billed as one of the geeky sort. Perhaps the largest highlight of the event was the appearance by George Takei, who signed autographs for the honored fans in tow.

In a wry Facebook post to fans less than two weeks after the 2015 event, ConnectiCon teased: "Did you know we've already begun planning ConnectiCon 2016?" Cosplayers don't want to be reminded of how long they have to wait until the next blockbuster in Hartford, but ConnectiCon is so good because the fan-run organization pushes the envelope every year- it's worth the wait! You won't want to miss the 2016 edition, so learn more at connecticon.org.



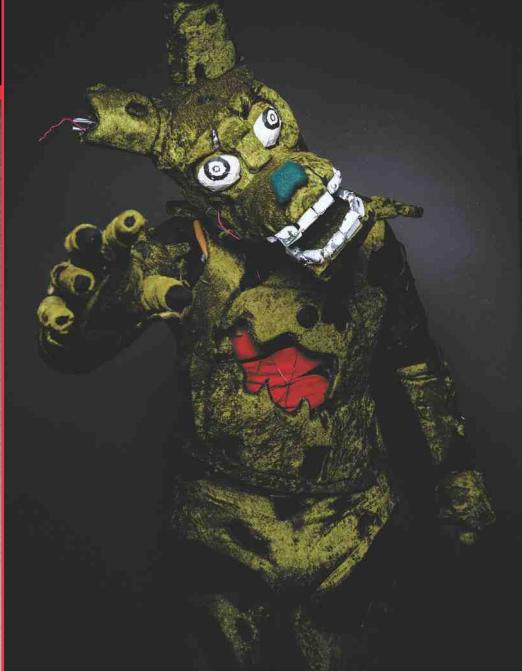














25,000 fans fill up the VCC for Fan Expo Vancouver

TEXT BY STACEY ROY ► PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN COOPER

In the last 10 years, conventions have substantially risen in popularity, specifically of the “nerd” and “geek” variety. In April 2015, Fan Expo Vancouver stacked up, at the VCC. Set in the heart of downtown Vancouver, the Vancouver Convention Center is a brand new, state-of-the-art, eco-friendly building that stands next to the waters of Coal Harbour. It is. Breathtaking. Inside, we were directed down giant escalators to the main hall. Cosplayers were in the best of spirits, stopping every five feet for a photo or three. Like all conventions, the entry was jammed with swarms of fans. Conventions are often largely about the vendor hall and Fan Expo did not disappoint! There was a seemingly endless maze of fantastic booths dedicated to amazing products and often even more amazing art! From the slick T-shirt designs of the Filthy Casual boys, to the incredible art by Mike Roshuk, if you don't find something here worth buying, you don't belong at a convention.





The guests were a big part of the fun. The legendary William Shatner was joined by Carrie Fisher and a myriad of other stars. Karen Gillan had to cancel at the last minute, much to the dismay of at least a dozen cosplaying Doctors. While the panel selection was fairly limited, there were a number of fantastic panels aimed at cosplayers, including several focused on costume-making and the local cosplay community. The 501st brought along a hallway's worth of fun games and activities for its popular children's hour panels.

Some incredible costumes were on display throughout the weekend including Master Chiefs, a full metal Sauron, and the always impressive 501st Stormtrooper legion. Vancouver really brought its A-game this year. Andy Rae Cosplay brought her Jupiter and Snow White much to the enjoyment of her many fans. Dayna Baby Lou, Ireland Reid, The Desu Dolls and Lunar Crow were also looking great and having fun. 🇨🇦

fanexpovancouver.com







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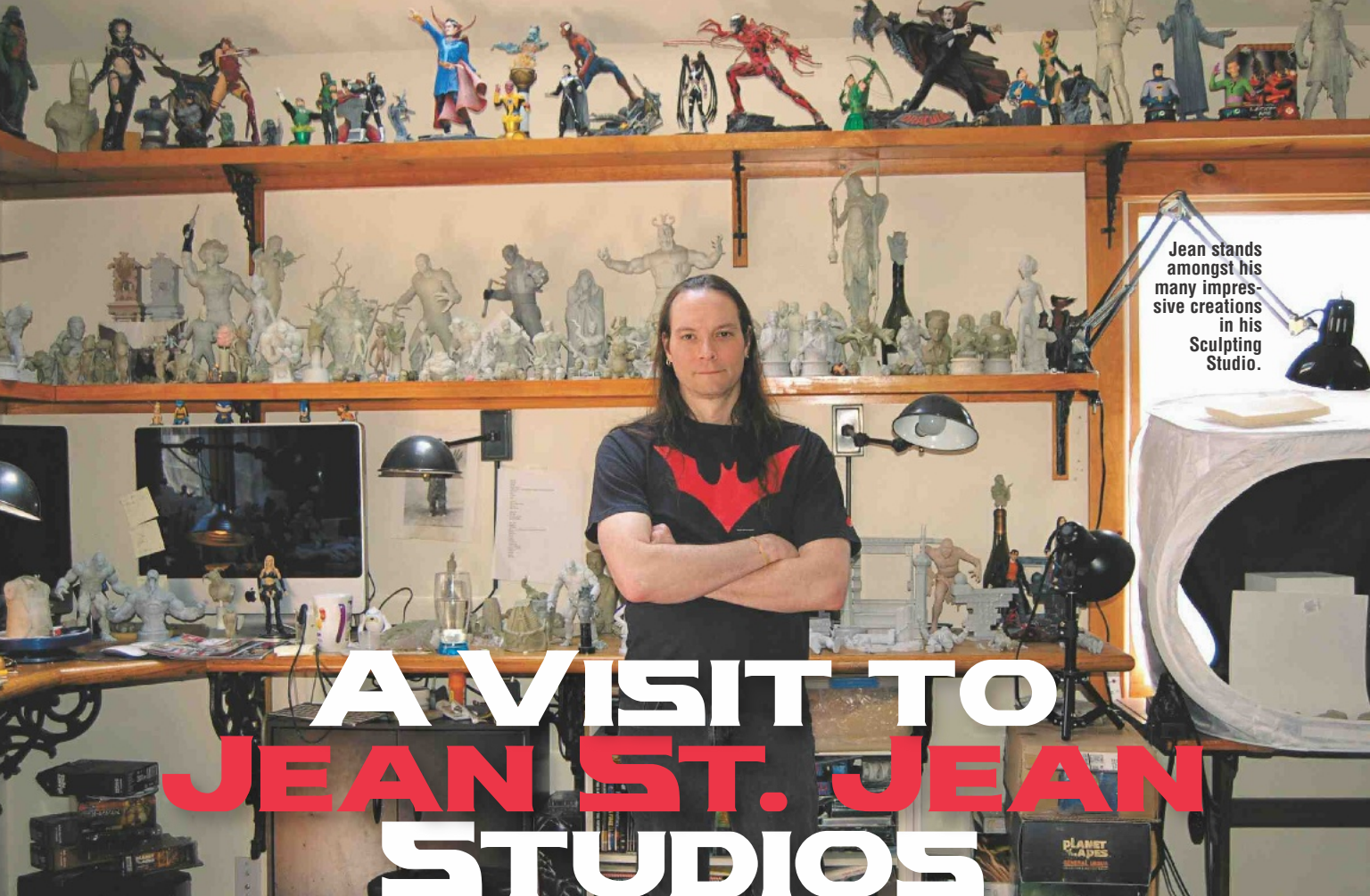


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Jean stands amongst his many impressive creations in his Sculpting Studio.

A VISIT TO JEAN ST. JEAN STUDIOS

ACTION FIGURES GONE WILD!!!

ARTICLE BY BILL WAYTOWICH ✦ PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK CAFIERO

Jean St. Jean Studios gives incredible insight as to how these stunning sculptures come to life. Jean is a pleasant and personable fellow who's really easy to get along with! He obviously loves what he does, not only because his work is superlative but also because he mentioned that he works until 4 a.m. quite often.

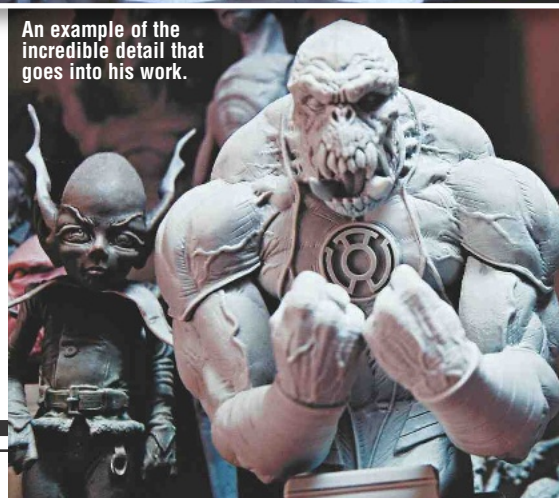
His fascination with superheroes and science fiction started at an early age. While the neighborhood kids played outside, he would often curl up inside with a good Ian Fleming book. He also preferred to read *Tarzan* and various other superhero comic books. The old Aurora horror model kits of the classic monsters were favorites, and he really enjoyed building plane and tank models, as well!

Jean mentioned that as a young adult he was very interested in music



A line of Jean's latest work.

An example of the incredible detail that goes into his work.



and was even in a band at one point, practicing music for 16 hours a day. He also holds a degree in classical piano. At the time, music was his love and sort of still is, but as we all know, sometimes life can unexpectedly take you in another direction. Jean said he just sort of fell into this field of sculpting, as he landed a job at McFarlane Toys as sculpting supervisor. He was responsible for sculpting the static sci-fi and horror statues. Life had somehow steered him right into the lap of professional sculpting. After a few years, he decided to establish his own sculpting studio and the rest is history!

Jean's studio is absolutely beautiful. He has all his sculpting tools, clay, photography equipment, and many examples of his work, nicely displayed. His favorite sculpts are Batman, Aquaman, Pumpkinhead and *Planet of the Apes*. He also has a huge collection of horror/sci-fi action figures on the other side of his stu-

dio, which include the old classic monster models he worked on as a kid. His wife supports him and loves what he does, but she wants him to possibly contain his collecting a bit. Jean might need more room soon for his ever-expanding collection!

He works by eye! No magnifying glasses used here, which is amazing because the detail on the smaller sculptures is just as incredible as the detail on the larger ones. He mentioned that he prefers to work on the smaller sculptures but might start to do more larger ones because the demand is there. Jean sometimes works on eight to 10 projects simultaneously. When he is finished, he sends pics to the client. After they send back comments, he moves on to the next stage until all revisions are done, if required.

Jean has a separate molding and casting department that keeps the dust at bay so it doesn't fly onto the clay sculptures

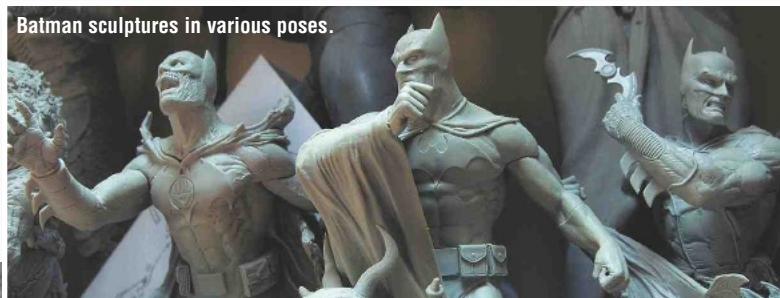
and Mezco. Jean's work can be found mostly in comic stores and online but some of his work can be found in the big toy stores.

Jean is very dedicated to his craft. He never stops working, and he takes his sculpting tools wherever he goes. For his masterpieces, he charges a flat sculpting fee. His clients sometimes give him specific instructions to base the sculpture on but when they don't, he takes it away from there! There are no preliminary sketches or drawings—Jean jumps right into the sculpture!

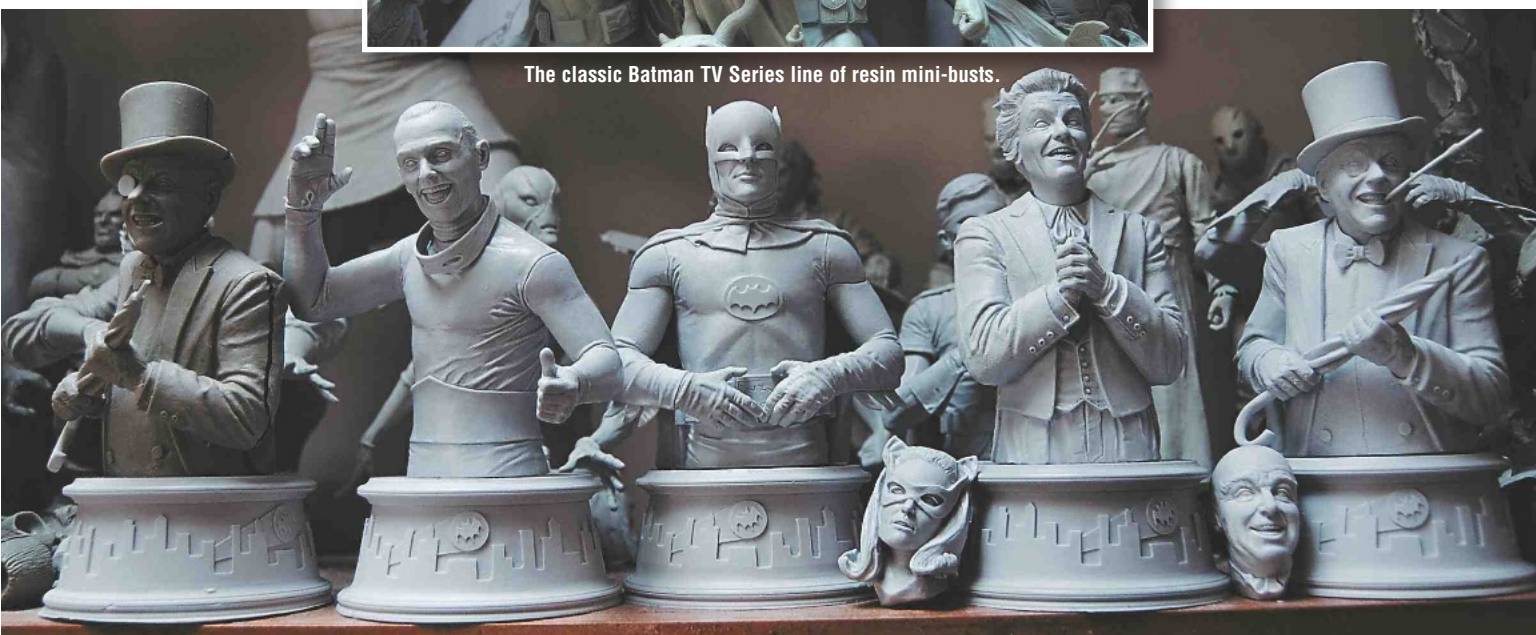
Jean has a scheduled October launch for his new cryptid line of action figures that includes the North American Sasquatch, Skookum,

Himalayan Yeti, HorrorHound, and the Louisiana Rougarou. The figures will be manufactured in China from PVC plastic. The whole process takes about a year from start to finish, and it will be exciting to

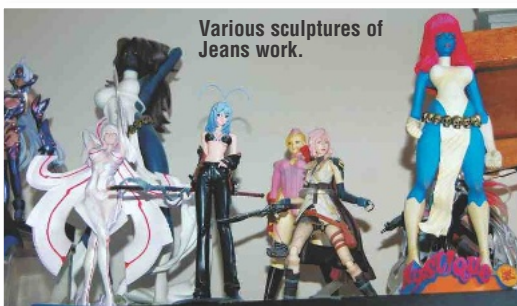
Batman sculptures in various poses.



The classic Batman TV Series line of resin mini-busts.



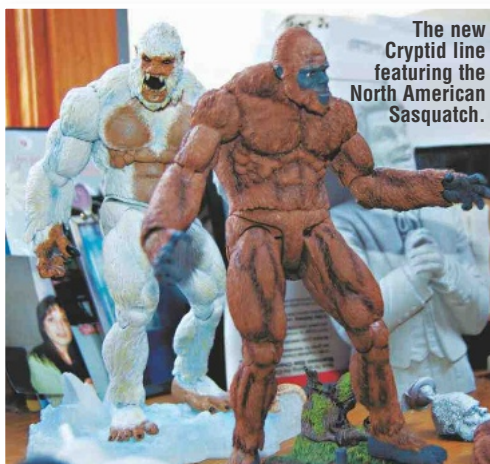
Various sculptures of Jeans work.



he's working on. His friend, Tony, does most of the assembling of the models! He has another friend who does the painting but sometimes when he has time, he does some himself. The painting technique used on these beautiful sculptures is airbrushing.

Jean has worked on a lot of plastic and polyvinyl banks that include Batman, Robin, Joker, Superman and Spider-Man. Marvel and classic superhero stuff is very popular these days! Most of the work Jean does is for Diamond Select. Jean mentioned that they are great to work with creatively, and let him use artistic license to develop these dazzling sculptures. He has also done work for DC Comics, Sideshow,

The new Cryptid line featuring the North American Sasquatch.




Some of Jean's favorites.



see this new line in the stores.

Jean's studio is in a charming, picturesque, wooded setting. He often will see deer and bear passing through.

Some of his upcoming work will involve revamping a static line of Universal Monsters to be articulated action figures.

These incredible sculptures are not just great to look at and collect but for you cosplayer's out there, they're a great way to get ideas for your own creations. 

For more information go to creaturelica.com or Facebook: JeanStJeanStudios

WHAT TO GET A COSPLAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

BY CASEY WALSH

It's no secret cosplayers are a unique type of people. Dedicated, fanatical, and creative, cosplayers, a multitasked lot, wear the passion on their sleeves—literally. But unfortunately for you as a cosplayer, parents, grandparents, relatives, and other loved ones tempted to buy you a Christmas gift this year still consider cosplay a niche artform that requires some explaining. But to save you and your stocking this year, Casey Claus is offering some gift-giving advice to those who may not have any clue what to get a cosplayer. Pass this issue of *Cosplay Culture* off to those buying your gifts this year: I'll take it from here.

Attention parents, family, and friends of cosplayers,

I know you want to do right this Christmas and really impress, maybe even inspire, the cosplayer in your life. Let me offer some simple, inexpensive, and useful gift ideas that every cosplayer is sure to love.

Materials, Materials, Materials

If there is one thing a cosplayer can always use it is building and crafting materials.

Whether it's Worbla, fabric, foam, plastic, or paint, cosplayers can use a wide array of materials to make their costumes come to life. I know gift cards can be cliché but no cosplayer would ever turn down some plastic purchasing power to your local fabric, arts and crafts, or hardware store. A gift card proves them with the freedom to make purchases when they need to, and frees you up from the "Did I get the right thing?!" syndrome. If you still want to shy away from the gift cards, something as simple as a sewing kit can easily make a cosplayer's Christmas.

You can always buy the raw materials yourself, but without getting detailed specifics from your giftee, you run the risk of purchasing something they don't need or won't use.

Price Range: \$10 and up

Retailers: Home Depot, Lowe's, Michaels, CosplaySupplies.com

It's All About the Accessories

Another thing cosplayers can't live without or get enough of is accessories. From wigs, to masks, and makeup, it's always the little things that make one cosplayer stand out from another. You may want to do a little digging before purchasing wigs just

to ensure you're getting the right color. But when it comes to things like makeup and masks, basic is always best. Black masks offer a variety of applications and modification options while makeup items like foundation and eyeliner are used by everyone and extremely often.

Costume face and body paint is also very useful and can usually be found discounted after Halloween. Just be careful when buying makeup and body paint as cheapest is not always best. Going with a high end brand may be a little more expensive but your cosplayer will appreciate it that much more. With accessories, you have a ton of options—plus they make great stocking stuffers.

Price Range: \$10-\$300

Retailers: Sephora, MAC Cosmetics, Snazaroo.com, arda-wigs.com

Inspiration

Cosplayers can gain inspiration from almost anywhere, but instead of venturing out on your own on this one, you may want to do a little investigative work to figure out some specific

mediums, genres, and characters that really appeal to the cosplayer you are aiming to satisfy.

Comic books offer a variety of costume designs for almost every character that graces a page. Marvel's *What If* comics, for example, are stories often out of continuity, allowing the writer and

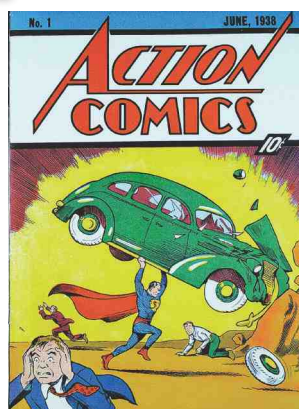
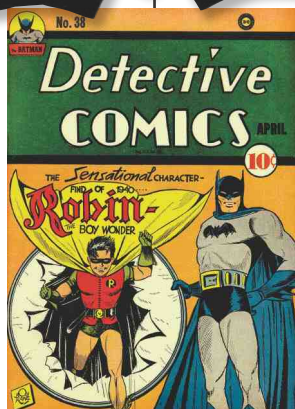
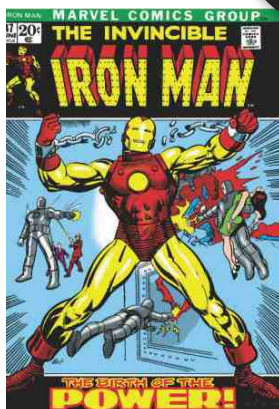
artist to step away from the events of the regular books. These comics can offer very different and unusual costume designs that will make your cosplayer stand out at their next con.

Movies and TV can also be huge influences on cosplayers as they allow the artist to see a living, working example of their next potential cosplay design. Thanks to special features, as well as the advent of high quality screenshots, cosplayers can get a detailed look at the costume that will inspire their next cosplay.

Price Range: \$1-\$100

Retailers: Comicshoplocator.com, Walmart, Target, Amazon.com

Good luck on your gift search. I hope the above tips aid you in your journey, but don't fret if this task turns out to be a difficult one. After all, geek or non-geek, most of us just want to know we are loved, and merely showing an interest in the fandom that drives the one you love can be a gift in itself. 🍀



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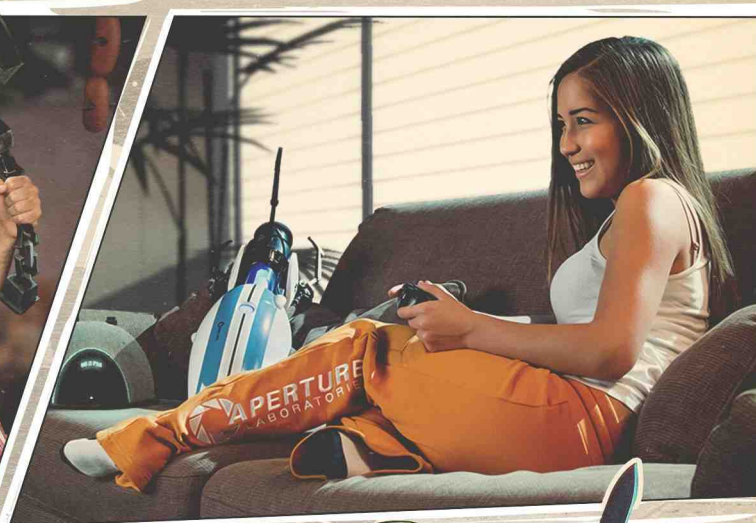
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